

TRICKS OUR MINDS
PLAY ON US

TRICKS OUR MINDS PLAY ON US

MENTAL HYGIENE FOR THE PLAIN MAN

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TO
ROBERT

Who has won the admiration of all who know him for making an excellent adjustment to a serious physical handicap and developing a personality with an insight and outlook no tribulation can disorganize.



PREFACE

TO THE READER

THIS BOOK was written for persons in every walk of life who desire to understand themselves better, to surmount their own difficulties, to enrich their day-by-day contacts with people and conditions, to undergird their own personalities with a sound practical philosophy, and to guide others in overcoming the barriers to a free and victorious type of individual ongoing experience.

The plan of the book is easily ascertainable. The opening chapter describes the wholesome, normal personality mainly in terms of major positive interests and constructive activities. Having offered an outline of the mentally healthy and socially useful human being, I then proceed to explore the deviations from the normal which are common and can be overcome or absorbed. Ways in which our minds tend to betray us are examined. Each of ten subsequent chapters analyzes a typical personality impediment or defect and presents suggestions for an appropriate adjustment.

The individual who is at odds with himself, mentally confused, emotionally depressed, occupationally maladjusted, and socially inept receives special consideration.

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The nature of his conflicts is explained and directions for transcending his limitations and improving himself are given. Although the themes of the chapters which are devoted to specific obstacles to wholesome living are stated negatively, the development of the implications of each topic is in a generous measure positive. Diagnosis is followed by prescription for the cure of thwarted and hampered personalities. A contribution to self-knowledge is combined with suggestions for self-revision.

Not that all the tricks our minds play on us have been accounted for and appraised. Typical ones have been selected for discussion. It is hoped that the attentive study of those presented will provide the reader with a basis for further self-examination and with representative effective procedures for improvement. To stimulate to self-discovery and promote personal enrichment is one of my primary objectives.

The extreme defects of personality, since they require the services of highly specialized medical men known as psychiatrists or are incurable, have not been introduced. The more simple and tractable but none the less depressing sorts of abnormalities which can be eliminated or borne have been selected for presentation.

The material is presented in non-technical language which everybody of average intelligence can understand. An effort has been made to make knowledge of the normal individual and the common personality disabilities available to all sorts and conditions of people—farmers, factory employees, mechanics, engineers, lawyers, physicians, teachers, mothers, housewives. The needs of young people as well as those of riper years are approached in plain terms.

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nology. The word "psychology" is not introduced, but the insights of mental science are appropriated. That I have drawn freely upon the gathered lore of clinical psychologists will be apparent to those who are conversant with recent developments in the field of mental hygiene. The results of my own observation, thinking and work as a counselor are made available in popular direct style.

Since this book is intended for the use of persons who are old enough to have the baffling and the agreeable experiences which in their totality we call life, the unfortunate occurrences in childhood, save in so far as they help to account for the conditions and situations of adults, have not been surveyed and interpreted. The size of this volume precludes the inclusion of more such material.

The final chapter stresses the relation of a workable philosophy of life to mental health, to poise and serenity and social adjustment. The value—yes, the indispensability—of convictions which stand the test of the ordeals life imposes is lifted into the prominence it merits. The position is maintained that an order of invisible, inaudible, and imponderable forces exists to the overtures of which we must respond if our personalities are to be soundly organized and fully developed, and to contribute richly to the world's stock of goodness. The existence of God and his relation to the individual, the validity and applicability of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, are cardinal principles in the philosophy of life commended to the reader.

The names assigned to the characters introduced in the illustrative material are fictitious and any correspondences between them and actual persons are purely coincidental.

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I gratefully acknowledge my obligations to the many who have encouraged me to write this book and given me valuable hints as to what I should include and how the subject matter should be treated. Mr. M. Leo Rippey's conversations with me about the situations and needs of the people with whom he is working in the field of adult education have been invaluable sources of information. His relationships with all types of people in a number of States of our country have given him an enviable insight into human nature and its representative exhibitions. I owe special thanks to Mr. Pat Beaird for practical advice concerning the plan and scope of the volume. He has generously shared with me his extensive experience as a publisher of books helpful to the reading public. It is a privilege to co-operate with him.

K. R. S.

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CHAPTER I

NORMALITY

WE DO NOT have much difficulty with the word "normality" unless we try to define it. When a reference is made to the "average" man we understand in general what sort of individual he is, but when we are requested to describe him in particular, differences of opinion arise. Similarly, when we begin to analyze normality we encounter obstacles which cannot be removed. Distinctions and discriminations are likely to confuse us. When we discuss normal people without attempting to describe in fine detail what they are and how they differ from those who are otherwise, we are not embarrassed and apparently comprehend one another. When we undertake to draw an absolutely unquestionable line of demarcation between normal people and people who deviate somewhat from them, we are perplexed, confused, and foiled.

Nobody knows exactly what constitutes a normal human being and in what particulars he differs from the individual who is not altogether mentally healthy. In fact, if a normal person is one who is perfect in every respect, one who is always intellectually alert, always emotionally stable, always free from moral faults, always entirely ad-

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justed to circumstances, and always guided by the highest standards of truth and beauty and duty, none of us is normal. The term "normal" is relative and flexible, although it does apply to those persons who are reasonably serene and are able to live in the modern world without extreme desperation—that is to say, without excessive emotional tension and calamitous social relationships.

Although the company of normal persons is composed of individuals of various degrees of mental and moral health, we may venture to describe several of the characteristics which they have in common. The activities and interests of normal human beings, which will be introduced, are broad in scope and diversified. A number of fundamental attitudes and enterprises make and keep people normal.

USEFUL EMPLOYMENT AND NORMALITY

In the first place, a normal person is engaged in a socially useful occupation. His life is not a jumble of unrelated and trivial experiences, nor is it devoted to a cause which is injurious to himself and a menace to others. His vocation, trade, business, or profession affords him personal satisfaction as well as bread and promotes the welfare of those whom he serves.

A gangster, a robber, a criminal, or a blackmailer, to cite extreme examples, when he is at large is haunted by the fear of detection and arrest and is therefore an anxious, worried man. A fugitive from justice or a person who knows that if his evil deeds are exposed he will be apprehended by the officers of the law, found guilty in a court trial, and confined in a penal institution cannot maintain

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a normal state of mind. On the other hand, the farmer and the physician, the bricklayer and the dentist, the merchant and the lawyer, the housekeeper and the teacher are engaged in vocations which society recognizes not only as useful but as necessary and honorable. In the pursuit of their respective callings they are protected by the law, approved by society, and have the satisfaction of making a positive contribution to community welfare in addition to earning a livelihood.

WORK IN ITS LARGER SETTING

Of course the man whose vocation, however legitimate, is distasteful to him is frustrated and therefore unable to do his best work. His situation is abnormal. A perpetually unhappy worker is emotionally depressed, and his efficiency is impaired. It is possible to do work which is honorable and indispensable and yet to be personally miserable. The physician who knows that he should be a farmer is unhappy as an individual and is rendered somewhat ineffective by his vocational maladjustment, despite an excellent medical education and an extensive practice.

Many who think they are square pegs in round holes would derive considerable satisfaction from their respective vocations and do better work if they knew how to relax and devote their leisure hours to wholesome recreation. They may be less vocationally miscast than they suppose. They have not learned that by alternating work and play the former is likely to be tolerable if not actually pleasurable.

On the other hand, the wise man recognizes that every vocation, however useful, has its disadvantages: needles

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will pierce the fingers of the tailor, parents will complain to teachers of the low grades given to children, grease and dirt defile the person of the garage man, the daily round of duties irk the housekeeper. The most useful vocation entails the element of monotony. If a man can look beyond the vexations of his occupation, take pride in his place in the world's work, and obtain a modicum of gratification from work well done, he may be said to be vocationally normal.

Fortunate is the housewife who understands the significance of her work in the home for the welfare of her children and husband, who derives satisfaction from cooking palatable and nourishing meals, from keeping the house tidy, from promoting the health of her brood, from expending wisely the money at her disposal, and from the many other tasks which occupy her hours. When a woman bewails her lot as a housewife, complains because she must care for little children, rebels because she must work with her hands in the home, she cannot be a normal person. After all, the most useful and dignified vocation for a woman is that of the homemaker. No good wife and mother is a failure.

Fortunate is the man who sees the relations of his daily work to the welfare of the community and his family. If he is a factory worker and performs a simple machine operation times without number each day and does not know or care what bearing his labor has on the finished manufactured product, he is either dull or miserable, unless he has personal interests which supply counteracting variation. To have the luscious sense of doing something which is an essential part of a larger whole is to invest his voca-

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tion with dignity and worth. If a man takes pride in his work, whether he is a waiter or a surgeon, his vocation is a vital part of himself. Work without the heart of the worker is listless, formal, and a drag. When the material returns are not the only motivating forces, when good work is at least in part its own reward, when a family is supported by the labor of hand or brain, the daily vocation contributes to normality.

Happiness through pleasure, creature comfort, and self-indulgence is not only an unattainable but also a treacherous goal. The nature of man is such that pleasure, as the master passion, turns upon the individual and converts him into a dullard. Could anything be more monotonous and boring than a life consisting of a continuous round of merrymaking? Such an arrangement makes life stale, flat, and unprofitable. To make a career of pleasure-seeking is to wreck health, jade the appetite, crave an increasing amount of excitement, and create a sense of the emptiness of life.

A far more worthy life-purpose, one which is rich in variety, compensations, and contentment, is the development of personality through the performance of duty, and the making of a contribution, to the measure of the individual's abilities, to the world's stock of enduring and precious possessions. The pursuit of such a goal, regardless of the pain or pleasure entailed, leads, sooner or later, to the enrichment of the personality and to a zest for living. To know oneself, to know what one's abilities are, to know and do well what one is capable of, is a necessary step in constructing a personality which is interesting, useful, and emotionally stable. The person who adopts such a practical

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program for his life will not be stupid and bored—and boring—other things being equal.

A positive relation between useful work and normality exists. Wise physicians prescribe work, especially manual labor, for patients who are mentally ill. Work done with the hands is an excellent remedy for depressed minds, for those who are emotionally unbalanced. Such labor tones and hardens the muscles, releases surplus energy, generates an appetite, improves digestion, and increases the circulation of blood. Useful work provides morbid states of mind an outlet, dissipates melancholy, drives away loneliness, cures boredom, imparts to life a sense of importance, and makes one a member of a vast army of men and women who together perform the world's necessary work ranging from street cleaning to the writing of immortal poems. It does much to make and keep one normal.

ADJUSTMENT TO PEOPLE

In the second place, the normal person is wholesomely related to other people. A man is after all a member of the human family. From others he receives most of what he is and has. Life itself has been derived from his parents. He inherits, as it were, his language, religion, politics, ways of acting, habits of thinking, and a thousand and one other possessions and types of experience from those who have directly and indirectly influenced him. If he should deliberately divest himself of all but what he himself has originated, he would be astonished at the pale ghost of himself which would remain. Since a man cannot become what one might call a human being apart from the gifts of others to him and apart from the little he can add to him-

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self and what he contributes to the welfare of others, isolation is both abnormal and devastating.

A wholesome attachment to at least a few people is essential to mental health. A recluse, one who lives by and unto himself, or a misanthrope, one who hates others, is dwarfed, warped, and abnormal. He leads an unnatural life. Only in intimate associations with others do we have the choice experiences of friendship, companionship, service, and self-development. To rejoice with those who rejoice, to weep with those who weep, to lend a hand to those in need, to receive encouragement and inspiration, to know that somebody cares what one does and is, conspires to make one normal. Flowers warm the heart, the stars fill us with awe, and the devotion of a dog is touching; but the love of another human being unites an individual in a relationship of personal intimacy with his own kind. Only another person can satisfy a unique human craving.

Although one should not make and hold friends in order to exploit them and to advance oneself socially and financially, the man who is rich in the number and kind of friends he has won has incidentally acquired a form of security which may be a substantial help in a day of adversity. This fact is by no means to be construed as the ultimate reason for the cultivation of human relationships. The greater the extent to which ulterior motives are shunned, the more precious human associations become. To be painfully conscious that nobody cares what becomes of one when fortune takes wings or health breaks or sorrows befall, undermines personality and subjects it to tests which are difficult if not impossible to endure. To give is to receive; to console is to be consoled; to understand is to be

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understood; to pardon is to be pardoned; to love is to be loved; to sacrifice is to be enriched.

To identify oneself with husband, wife, child, or friend is to establish a relationship with another human being whom one needs and by whom one may be needed. Life is incomplete without such an intimacy. To share the varied experiences of another profits both, and makes each sympathetic, understanding, and unselfish. A man thus links himself with the human race, of which he is a unit. Emotional gratification springs from such a fundamental identification. It satisfies him just to be in the presence of the one who is close to him. Heart speaks to heart; each senses the mood of the other; life interprets life, although not a single word may be spoken. Two friends used to spend many an evening together, neither saying a dozen words; but when they parted each felt that he had had fellowship with the other which was priceless.

Let one take time to mean something important to another, and that other will pay one the tribute of his attachment. It will increase the normality of each to bear with the faults, foibles, and limitations of the other. Each will have abundant occasion to exercise the patience of a saint with the other's shortcomings. In the intimate interchange normality will be mutually promoted. The law of compensation operates in the domain of human attitudes.

PERSONAL GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

In the third place, the normal person is honest and capable enough to examine and improve himself. Critical self-analysis is essential to the development of normality.

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To pretend, daydream, excuse one's faults, and to be content with unnecessary limitations is the policy and program of childish people even if they are more than forty years old. The normal individual does not hesitate to admit and condemn his shortcomings and to muster the courage and the will to amend his conduct. To engage in self-improvement is a sign of normality. The normal person is always at work uprooting some defect which he has discovered and which hampers him in his quest for the enrichment of life. To be smugly content with oneself is to diminish normality.

Character flaws, offensive habits, oddities, and eccentricities are eliminated in their incipient stages by the growing and alert personality. Barriers to a more useful and interesting life are removed as soon as they are detected. Ways and means for the enlargement of life are appropriated. The normal personality is an expanding one; it is not fixed, unalterable, and static. It constantly revises itself by the processes of candid self-exploration and intelligent reconstruction. Although no man has the gift of seeing himself as he really is, and others cannot have an accurate knowledge of his character and abilities, the normal man does realize that he is not perfect and is ever seeking to revise himself. The self-satisfied personality deteriorates. The price of normality is an honest discontent with weaknesses and a constant effort to register progress.

The increasingly normal person may make a list of questions which aid him in self-examination and in the construction of a more competent, a more victorious, and a more vibrantly attractive personality. The person who desires the more abundant life asks himself questions like the following: Do I meet misfortune with courage? Am I a

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friend to those in need regardless of race or station? Am I frugal, industrious, and honest? Do I find satisfaction in what the thoughtless call simple things, such as children, animals, trees, flowers, and sunsets? Do I occasionally read a good book? Am I loyal to my employer and serve his best interest? Is my relationship to those who are my flesh and blood wholesome? Do I cultivate an attitude of goodwill toward any who may shamefully treat me? Am I constantly widening my circle of friends? What measures do I adopt to conserve or regain bodily health? Do I resent well-meant and deserved adverse criticism? As life proceeds he may revise the list, discarding irrelevant questions and adding others which are pertinent. The method is not important if only he faces himself and regards life as a perpetual adventure in normality.

SYMPATHETIC INTEREST IN PEOPLE

In the fourth place, the normal individual has a sympathetic understanding of the situations of others. The abnormal person is immersed in his own affairs, absorbed by his own desires and preferences, preoccupied with his own feelings and grievances. He is morbidly concerned with his own vexations and perplexities. He is self-centered. When by chance he encounters the difficulties of another person, they simply remind him of his own; he is not led to an appreciation of the other's predicament coupled with practical efforts to help him extricate himself. The normal person is brotherly and enters into the joys and sorrows of others with an intelligent wholeheartedness that is both genuine and helpful.

Stephen was an attendant at a gasoline station. He

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was courteous without being servile, interested in people without being morbidly curious, friendly without being impertinent, of assistance without ignoring or questioning the judgment of the customers. Many a motorist went out of his way in order to let Stephen fill the empty gasoline tank or change the oil in the crankcase. He never seemed to consider himself, his own convenience, or his own advantage. How often I have heard him say, "We are here to help one another. Now may I do this for you." Stephen developed a charming personality despite the fact that he was not highly educated, had no artistic inclinations, and was poor and depended for his living upon the meager wage he earned.

The secret of his popularity with all classes of people was his intelligent unselfishness, his tactful helpfulness to any in need. His advice in regard to automobiles, the repairs which they might require, tires, and a thousand other related things was sought by almost every motorist who knew Stephen. He was fully as keenly interested in the personality problems of those with whom he made contact. He never invaded the privacy of another, nor superimposed his opinions upon even the closest friend, but at all times displayed such an attitude of understanding brotherliness that men in all walks of life, the rich as well as poor, sought him out and laid before him their life problems. It is superfluous to add that Stephen was a normal man.

To be able and willing to place oneself into the position of one's fellow men is an indication of normality. Misunderstanding of the motives and opinions of others and condemnation of their deeds are often the inevitable results

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of unwillingness in imagination to stand where they are, to visualize their situations, to see things through their eyes, to grasp their points of view. One can be neither charitable nor helpful, neither just nor appreciative, until one has learned to divest oneself of prejudices, personal opinions, and for the time being of one's own handicaps and to give oneself without reservation to others and their concerns, anxieties, hopes, and aspirations. When a man learns to do that he will increase his normality.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In the fifth place, the normal person cultivates a tension-reducer in the form of an avocation or hobby. The use of labor-saving machinery is giving the manual worker an increased amount of leisure time. A distinguished woman visitor from Germany, when asked what impressed her most in our housekeeping, replied, "The number of mechanical devices at the command of American homemakers." One recalls offhand at least a dozen electrical appliances which may be found in a large number of American homes, such as the electric light, the electrically controlled furnace, the electric washing machine, the electric refrigerator, the electric flatiron, the electric heating pad, the electric toaster, the electric clock, and the electric fan. A farmer facetiously remarked that he owned so much labor-saving agricultural machinery that he was planning to build a gymnasium in which his hired men might take the required amount of physical exercise. How shall the laborer occupy the additional hours free from the occupation by means of which he earns his daily bread? To be sure, he may engage in many activities which improve his

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mind, add to his skill as a worker, and make him generally more efficient as an employee.

It is not exactly the more or less utilitarian employment of leisure time which I have in mind. The reference is to those diversions and recreations in which one engages for the sheer pleasure and change which they yield. So far from being financially profitable they may actually entail an outlay of money. They are not indulged in for any material advantage they may possess. They are ends in themselves; as activities they culminate in the satisfactions which they produce.

Despite opportunities for leading interesting lives most of us are victimized by a dull, drab, and monotonous existence. To be sure, millions seek variety and escape from boredom in commercialized amusement such as the movies offer and in reading trash. These people do not thereby improve their minds, widen the horizon of knowledge, foster an appreciation of the beautiful, and make life as a whole more worthwhile. They themselves continue to be uninteresting and, save for hours they spend in diversion, are bored by life. A young woman who has for several years studied human nature in her capacity as attendant in a lending library remarked that most of the borrowers of books read, in order to forget hardships or to kill time. She added that the content of what they read does not greatly concern them, and that they read in substance the same sort of matter in book after book. In fact, almost any material serves if only it is a story that makes no demands upon the intellect. She called most of the books chosen mental sedatives.

An elect few can find enrichment of life in work of

merit which is a specialized contribution to human welfare. The teacher, the doctor, the lawyer, or the scientist may derive such a measure of daily satisfaction from his profession that no need is felt for change and variation; but the average housekeeper, the farmer, the factory operator, if he is not uplifted by the relation of his toil to the world's needs, is depressed by the monotony of the routine. On the other hand, the personal difficulties of the professional man, as well as those of the day laborer, may impose restrictions which repress the possibilities of leading a more abundant, varied, interesting, and satisfying life. The doctor may be distressed when he is not actually ministering to the needs of a patient. The practice of his profession day and night is a form of mental sedative which makes him forget a personality problem, rather than a stimulus to face and solve it. It robs him of the periods of recreation which balance a man's life. The ceaseless and intensive application of the estimable virtue of industry may produce lives devoid of joy, relaxation, and serenity. Work, hard work, is essential to normality; but man liveth not by work alone, but also by other things, including play.

William Amos, an actor, had occasion to pay a teacher a visit. He was a man who evidently was under constant strain and did not know how to play. When he was about to take his departure, the teacher inquired, "Mr. Amos, don't you ever relax?" The actor placed his hat upon a chair and confided that for years he had attempted to escape a personal situation by feverish and constant professional activity. The result of the confession was the effective disposition of his predicament and a calm and collected frame of mind. From that day Mr. Amos alternated work

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and play and led a more normal life. In many cases the individual is too tense to engage in recreation because of nervous interference.

Occupational monotony and the petty vexations of the multifarious day-by-day occurrences generate an emotional state which if not released in pleasurable activity depresses the mind, creates irritability and restiveness. An avocation gives vent to gloomy and unwholesome mental conditions which life develops and which are inescapable. A hobby such as gardening or collecting postage stamps or making ship models releases such emotional tension. The balance of mind and body is restored by wholesome diversions. James William lives in a small town, is a business man and in middle life. For relaxation and recreation he rides horseback, makes bows and arrows, is the leader of an archery club, the master of a Boy Scout troop, and constructs simple articles of furniture. The dull moments in his life are few in number. His avocations provide not only changes from business routine and different types of self-expression, but also stimulating contacts with young people.

Somebody has sagely remarked that the American people need more poor music, more poor poetry, more poor sports, more poor plays. The point that the author of the statement makes is that too many people in their free hours resort to commercialized amusements, to concerts rendered by artists and plays presented by professional actors. Instead of being amused or entertained by others we ourselves should be actively engaged in writing dramas and poems, playing games and composing music, even if the results are inferior. Although we do actually derive considerable recreation from the works and performances of others, we

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receive greater benefit from forms of recreation which we ourselves produce. A change of occupation, the exercise of initiative, the development of latent powers, and an exhilarating sense of accomplishment are consequences of recreational activities of our own.

In order to contribute to normality the tension-reducer must afford pleasure and exhilaration. If the avocational outlet is vexatious, and provokes anger or envy, it defeats the purpose which it should serve. The golfer who, when he fails to tabulate the customary low score, in a rage throws his clubs into a water hazard, curses his caddy, and makes life a hardship for the members of his family for a week, induces rather than reduces emotional tensions. The mental states which refresh and invigorate are not aroused by ire. When recreation and diversion send one back to daily work, difficulties, and responsibilities with renewed courage, strength, and zest, normality is conserved or multiplied.

AN ADEQUATE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Finally, the normal person has a sound philosophy of life, a satisfactory general point of view, a sustaining conception of the meaning of human life and the world we inhabit. A practical philosophy of life which is one of sufficiency motivates and sanctions right conduct, affords the deepest emotional satisfaction, arouses the intellect, and unites one with fundamental and ultimate reality.

An adequate philosophy of life is conscience-stirring. It does not tolerate a divorce between practicable standards of conduct and life. Moral excellence is an essential in-

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gradient of normality. No attempt is made to condone inexcusable behavior. One assumes full responsibility for deeds of commission and faults of omission. In fact, new insights into the demands of life are acquired as the dictates of an alert conscience are obeyed. The normal person learns that fresh light upon personal obligations is forthcoming only to him who does what he sincerely believes is right. Conscience is being constantly directed and quickened by the discharge of recognized duty. Most of us do not stand in need of more moral light, but of more moral power. Conscience approves acceptable moral action and becomes progressively sensitive through exercise.

A supporting view of life is emotionally assuring. It is heart-satisfying. It induces inner poise, harmony, and contentment. It is not emotionally impractical or morally sterile. It glows with moral earnestness and at the same time supplies the spirit of man with something for which he hungers and thirsts. Although it rests and quiets the heart of a man, the emotionally constructive experience is also the spring of moral action. Knowledge of duty, emotionally nourished, is effective. Dependable knowledge is the basis of the control of personality, but apart from vitalizing emotions it is powerless. Peace and moral fervor, contentment and a desire to comply with the mandates of an enlightened conscience, are not incompatible.

A philosophy which is equal to life's day-by-day requirements as well as to its emergencies calms and soothes the mind. Without the tranquillity and serenity which are unshattered by the storms of life, no man is entirely normal. The poised frame of mind enables one to examine and absorb the shocks that life sooner or later imparts. Emo-

tional disturbances hamper the process of reasoning and practical adjustment.

The normal person is free from protracted or frequently repeated destructive emotional experiences. Although the emotional life of the mentally healthy individual fluctuates—and perhaps nobody is absolutely emotionally stable—he is not victimized by the passions such as greed, hatred, and lust, or by alternating periods of excessive elation or despondency. He may be perplexed by peril or loss, but does not despair. Misunderstood by others, he may be regretful but not melancholy. Anger, malice, jealousy, and continued anxiety are the arch destroyers of sanity and reason, security, and peace, as well as of the moral foundations.

Equanimity and serenity are major emotional objectives of a normal man. The temperate, moderate, and constructive attitudes are hallmarks of normality. One is grateful for benefits received but not effusive, sympathetic but not maudlin, self-respectful but not inordinately proud, self-confident but not foolhardy, intellectually honest but not pessimistic, aggressive but not coldly destructive, self-controlled but not indifferent. Occasions for fear are balanced by mounting courage. The emotions which make personality self-reliant, kind, considerate, and creative are cultivated by the normal. In the hour of success one is sober and thoughtful, and in the day of defeat calm and collected. Tranquillity is not an undeviating state of placidity, of constant unruffled contentment, but a habitual frame of mind which facilitates adjustment, without exhausting nervous friction, to the various situations, critical or otherwise, which develop in the course of daily living.

NORMALITY

A philosophy of life that promotes normality is thought-provoking. The normal individual is a learner to the end of his span of life, unless an accident to the brain or the childishness of old age befalls him. He shuns an intellectuality that is critically cold. One may try to be so intellectual that one stands helpless in the presence of one's own life-needs, to say nothing of those of others. The head of the normal man does not eliminate his heart.

It is possible to be so absorbed by the fascinations of speculation that duty is neglected. It should be borne in mind that by nature some people are more interested in perplexing problems than other persons of an equal degree of normality. It is quite natural for some to try to solve the mystery of unmerited physical suffering, of the presence and power of evil in the world, and of human existence. Furthermore, many can never achieve normality until they have learned that one can be good, do good, be happy, and live heartily without being able to supply convincing answers to questions which have perplexed the most intelligent people throughout the ages. It is essential to know that a helping hand can be extended to another weighted with difficulty without being able to fathom the reason why human beings are burdened with troubles. It is perhaps more important to wage war against physical evil and to overcome moral evil than it is to give a cogent reason for their devastating existence.

The normal individual is intelligently applying guiding principles to specific contingencies as they emerge in the course of living. Cut-and-dried rules are for little children and immature adults. The principles of justice, compassion, decency, and honor can be effectively expressed in

actual situations only when the person has the ability to analyze a case into its component parts, to judge accurately the relative value of each part, and to select the appropriate solution if it is available. Thinking is hard work. Many reflect the unfounded opinions of others, and imagine they are engaged in the difficult process of thinking for themselves. While the ability to think clearly varies with individuals, it is a fact that the normal man utilizes the intellectual powers he has. He is aware of the human tendency to harbor prejudice, and tries not to confuse a bias with a judgment. Thought must be translated into action, sound principles applied to particular situations.

THE CULTIVATION OF A PRESENCE

Finally, a philosophy of life which enables one to endure the stress of what cannot be surmounted, to eliminate what can be vanquished, and to develop normal personality includes contact with a living Presence at once unshakable and invincible. It is as if a man panting for water sank a shaft into the ground, tapped an underground spring, brought water to the surface, and quenched his thirst. A life-giving something not ourselves but essential to normality is sought and found by the questing personality. Apart from it man is incomplete. The name given it is not supremely important, but the process of drawing upon its reserves for support and sustenance is a fundamental requirement of normality.

The normal man cleaves to something which is stable in a shifting world, which survives the perishing external order of nature, which is dependable and friendly although kingdoms rise and fall. Reliance on this something which

NORMALITY

we may consider the Ultimate, with a purpose and a power nothing can defeat, imparts to a human being a sense of security, of confidence, of worth, of dignity. It links one in a vital relation to the heart and center of all things, and therefore one's own world of personality cannot collapse.

In formulating a philosophy of life the existence of a supreme Power with its response to the individual human being is a principle which is bound to arise. The question, Is the universe in charge of a central, illuminating, and organizing Being? confronts every man with a gleam of intelligence and demands an answer. If ignored at the time, it will obtrude itself with increased insistence at an unanticipated hour. Each of us must come to terms with the Heart of all. We may resist the divine overtures or surrender to them. Normality embraces the recognition and appropriation of the eternal and redemptive Love which seeks us before we turn to it for the help and fellowship it offers.

Useful work and plenty of it, satisfying relationships with other people, candid self-examination and constant self-improvement, a helpful appreciation of the situations of others, a pleasurable avocation or tension-reducer, and a philosophy of life which is morally acceptable, emotionally gratifying, energizing, and intellectually respectable, together with a dynamic sense of the Superhuman, all contribute to the normality of men. Of course the list of healthful practices and interests might be extended. The appreciation of the works of nature, for example, might well be added. On the other hand, the ingredients briefly described will indicate essentials of normal personality. Although each possesses a unique value and makes a distinc-

tive contribution, they are also related, interpenetrate, support one another, and form a combination.

Why do so many people vary from the normal? Ignorance of what constitutes normality, debilitating home situations, sheer indolence, and the economic and political strains of the times, account for the majority of deviations which hamper individuals, make them discontented and cynical, and prompt them to be at odds with the world. In the final analysis they are betrayed by themselves. They themselves are principally at fault. Attention will now be directed to several representative tricks our minds plays on us. The victims are not so severely afflicted that they must be confined in institutions for the mentally deranged; but their ailments do repress their gifts, induce unhappiness, loneliness, social maladjustment, and defeatism.

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AS we grow up we become keenly aware of forces within us which, unless we understand them, disturb, confuse, and mislead us. One seems to embody several different kinds of individuals. Urges struggle for release in action—love and hate, hunger and anger, sex and curiosity. The desire for personal safety, as well as that for excitement, is insistent. The burning wish for recognition and approval by others is vigorous, and the longing for power over things and people seeks expression in dominance.

Multitudes are swayed by instincts, impulses, and drives the nature and function of which they do not comprehend. They consider certain active tendencies evil and others highly commendable. They are confounded by the existence of different impulsions of which they are acutely conscious. We shall investigate three powerful and complicating internal forces—hunger, anger, and sexuality—in order that we may understand and control them. Knowledge of these native and primitive powers, directed by ideals, leads to their proper utilization.

THE PRIMACY OF NUTRITION

Let us begin with hunger for food. The body, in order to acquire or maintain health and strength, requires a certain quantity of proper nourishment. To date no substitute for food has been discovered or devised. A poem will not take the place of bread and meat and drink; food is so essential to life that nothing else can render its service. For things basic no substitutes exist. Without air, water, and solid foods it is impossible to sustain this earthly life.

Periodically the normal person feels hungry. His appetite demands satisfaction. Eating well-cooked food is a pleasant as well as necessary occupation. The individual may go to either one of two extremes—he may eat much more than he needs or he may deny himself as much food as he requires.

The wise man studies his physical requirements and learns by judicious experiments how much and what kind of food his body needs. He regulates the process of nourishment according to his individual necessities. The laborer, the man who works with his hands and expends a prodigious amount of energy in manual toil, requires more food than the office worker who sits on a stool during working hours and uses his brain or performs a light routine task. The growing boy engaging in vigorous bodily exercise needs more food than his grandfather dozing in the sunshine or nodding by the fireside. The quantity of food which a healthy lad consumes will arouse in his elders an attitude compounded of awe and alarm if they overlook the fact that it is necessitated by a body which is increasing in size and is active. Proper diet, meals which are both

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balanced and determined by one's age and the kind of life one leads, is essential to normal personality.

Disobeying or disregarding the laws of living, many eat either far too much or the wrong kinds of food. They succumb to the pleasures of the table. It is not difficult to cultivate an appetite for an excess quantity of food. To think of food frequently, habitually to imagine the delights of the table, is to make the digestive juices flow almost constantly and hunger assert itself too frequently. The practice of overeating expands the stomach, and the appetite of the glutton is not satisfied until he has completely filled that organ with food. The man who lives to eat pays the penalty which nature exacts. If his weight is too excessive, the heart and other organs are overstrained. The person who is devoted to the luxurious sensuous enjoyment of the table, if he weighs too much, will in all probability shorten his life. He will break down under the burden of excess baggage. These statements do not apply to the person who eats heartily but by nature maintains the weight which life-insurance tables indicate as normal.

At the other extreme we find those who regard the eating of good food even in moderate quantities a form of self-indulgence to be condemned and avoided. They reason that since eating is pleasurable it must be wrong. To be absorbed in the making of a critical decision to such an extent that one actually forgets food for the time being is one thing; deliberately to adopt an insufficient diet, a diet which diminishes one's powers, is quite another thing. Moved by religious scruples many abstain from the consumption of the quantity and quality of food necessary to health; others resort to a too restricted diet because they

desire a figure more slender than nature intended them to display.

DIET AND LIFE EXPECTANCY

Hunger for food and drink can be properly controlled or misused. The normal man abstains from foods which disagree with him, eats balanced meals—meat, milk products, eggs, vegetables, bread, fruits—and lets his age and occupation determine the quantity. If he is unnaturally overweight, he will not take patent medicines or nostrums in order to reduce, but will decrease the quantity of food eaten. Instead of continuing to eat two pieces of bread at a meal, he will eat only one. If he likes butter he will not eliminate it entirely from his diet, but will consume a smaller portion. He will bear in mind that overeating has stretched his stomach and that a smaller quantity of food will occasion a sensation of insatiableness until the size of the stomach has been reduced to normal proportions. He will take into active account whether he has inherited a tendency to be fat or slim or medium.

The diet should not be left to chance or determined by a preference for certain foods. To eat only what one relishes most may confine one to a diet including foods which are actually deleterious. A child might restrict his diet to candy, and other foods containing an excessive amount of sugar, if he were left to his own devices. The adult should not put his trust in the foods most palatable to him, for Mother Nature is not always a wise dietitian. Although it is true that modern researches have overthrown the extravagant claims for spinach made for decades and have come to the defense of the banana, once supposed to

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be exceptionally hard to digest, and that uncertainty of the values of other edibles exists, the science of dietetics has sufficiently developed to guide us in the selection of the foods which the individual needs to repair the organism and to maintain life.

After forty the average man should eat at least four meals a day, but the total amount of food should not exceed that which he should consume in three meals. He should divide the amount sufficient for him among more than three meals in order to reduce the energy required to digest and assimilate the needful food. The digestive apparatus is overtaxed by a food intake, however necessary, in an insufficient number of meals. The prudent man keeps a continuous stream of food flowing through the alimentary canal by eating as many meals a day as experience has demonstrated to be most advisable. This practice not only constantly generates a supply of energy, but also forestalls the overexertion of the digestive and related organic systems at any one time. Of course he exercises caution lest he consume a total quantity in excess of his actual requirements.

Strenuous activity and considerable overweight lead to an early death. Less activity despite the same amount of overweight is conducive to a longer life. Moderate activity and no overweight further increase the span of life. The duration of life, other things being equal, depends on bodily weight and expenditure of energy. Hunger is an appetite the function of which it is well to understand, an appetite deliberately to be made one's servant and not permitted to become one's master.

THE TREACHERY OF ANGER

Anger is another potent force. It is a high explosive. It prompts a person to embarrass, overcome, or destroy the one who has aroused it. It is an exceedingly treacherous emotion. The angry individual does not think clearly or judge accurately; he is incapable of analyzing the anger-arousing situation and of appraising at its proper worth each of its constituent elements. He has a distorted conception of the provocation as a whole. Anger blinds one to things as they really are, makes one unreasonable, and moves one to deeds which are stupid, regrettable, and often injurious. Anger, to say the least, incites to acts of violence which are out of proportion to the offense which has incensed the provoked individual.

It is an important fact that anger is about the first emotion which grips the infant. It is as primitive as it is menacing. When little children are not given attention or whatever they demand, they are prone to give way to anger. The same may be said of undisciplined adults. A farmer tried to drive an obtuse chicken along a path to the henhouse. The chicken, seemingly devoid of understanding or stubborn, refused to go in the direction in which the farmer attempted to force it. In his rage the farmer caught the chicken, killed it, dragged the lifeless body over the path and muttered that this would teach it a lesson. No doubt he had a luscious sense of righteousness when he performed this despicable and entirely useless act. If permitted to hold sway, anger can play most devastating tricks on us and express itself in wanton destruction of property or life.

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Anger is evidently a painful and destructive consciousness of being thwarted, hindered, insulted, or deprived of reputation or worldly goods. Of course persons differ in proneness to anger; some people are more calm in exasperating circumstances than others. Anger constitutes a serious problem for excitable and volatile persons, whereas it plays but a minor role in the lives of those who are placid and habitually good-natured. The person who quickly generates a high voltage of anger, if he would forestall the lamentable consequences for himself and others, must be intelligent, resourceful, and self-controlled.

A man may be angry because his misdeeds have been discovered and justice has overtaken him. His anger may be aroused by failure to avoid detection and retribution. He may not realize that in the circumstances an explosion of anger is a defense. The shrewd lawyer knows that if the accused stages an exhibition of anger when he is cross-examined in court, he is likely to be guilty. The intelligent guiltless man, although by no means flattered by false accusation and actually annoyed, does not proceed to retaliation but to explanation and the presentation of evidence which will establish his innocence.

THE CONTROL OF WRATH

The wise man whose ire is aroused by trivialities or major provocations is aware of the fact that the fruits of anger are bitter. Anger does not promote friendship and good will. It wrecks friendships of long standing and creates ill will. It is not creative. The mere knowledge that anger is futile and destructive should be an effective deterrent. An outburst of anger may provide momentary

satisfaction, but the consequences are too costly for the temporary relief afforded.

Furthermore, the prudent man curbs anger in its incipient stages. Before it has gained control of the personality, anger is most readily and effectively checked. Self-discipline is difficult when anger has gained momentum. Once a passion has assumed full control, the entire personality dances to the tune of it. When one feels the first stirrings of anger, one should ask oneself the question, "In a year from now shall I regret that I did not restrain myself?" In view of what anger unleashed and unbridled may lead to, one may wisely exercise self-control and even endure injustice.

Anger can be discharged in ways that afford relief without harm. Emotion can be released in motion which is commendable. When provoked one should take a brisk walk, mow the lawn, or hoe the garden—not let the sun go down upon wrath. Though induced as by an irresistible force to write a letter expressing withering scorn and condemnation to the one who has incited the anger, after it has been composed one may tear it into bits and throw them into the wastebasket or the fire. Such a form of relief, while not the most praiseworthy, is better than actually attacking the instigator. A more excellent way is open. Personal consultation with the adversary and the resultant clarifying conversation may disclose that the anger was born of misunderstanding. No offense may have been intended. One must try to be reasonable, asking oneself whether the provocation is to any extent warranted, and, if so, how one can make amends, avoid a repetition of the offense, and improve one's own character. Even if a candid

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and accurate analysis of the situation reveals that the accuser has wronged maliciously, it must be remembered that anger turns on itself and corrupts the heart from which it springs. But evil can be overcome by doing good. One can at least make the attempt if opportunity presents itself; in fact, can try to create an occasion for the exercise of impartial good will.

GOOD WILL AND RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

The taking of revenge and the poisoning of self by the virus of hatred can be resisted. Self-mastery which conquers the savage impulse of anger is generally unexpected by a spiteful antagonist. When the anticipated outburst of rage is not forthcoming the adversary is surprised. Since his expectation has not been realized, he is momentarily confused; and then he has ample time to reconsider whatever he has done with intent to harm. He is deprived of the intoxication of meeting violent recrimination with additional provocation. He may repent and sue for pardon; but whether or not he changes his attitude, the position of non-retaliation is dignified and gives no cause for further attack. A high self-esteem can never yield to such a primitive and destructive force as undisciplined anger.

If manly acceptance of wrong without hatred can be transformed into good will which is expressed when due occasion arises, anger will have become a benevolent power. One of the saintliest men I have ever known patiently endures the hostility of those whom he has without malice antagonized. When sorrow or want enters the home of any one of them, he is the first to lend comfort and aid, and without hope of reward or expectation of permanently

removing opposition. He heaps coals of fire upon the head of an opponent without regard to the results. The undeserved ill will of others has only made him more generous and sympathetic. So far from poisoning his heart the animosity of shortsighted men has only filled it with active compassion for all in tribulation.

The final reference to anger is not negative but constructive. The person who does not burn with righteous indignation in the presence of wrongs done the defenseless, the ignorant, and the oppressed is a spineless creature. Anger, not against another, but on his behalf, is not only justifiable but virtuous. Anger which moves one to eliminate the causes which produce iniquities is a force for good. A powerful emotion like an outraged sense of justice makes righteousness aggressive. It converts an idea into action. Men who have been possessed by indignation have fought chattel slavery, child labor, political intolerance, industrial oppression, illiteracy, and other giant obstacles to human welfare. The hero does not avenge an affront to himself, but, impelled by a fiery zeal and guided by intelligence, comes to the aid of the exploited. It is possible to love the perpetrator of evil and to strive to reclaim him and at the same time to abhor his deeds and to put an end to them.

SEX AND SENSE

The sexual urge induces much confusion and distress among people whose ideals and character are above reproach. Among the dissolute and depraved, the primitive and the uncultured, sexual desires are overtly expressed more or less promiscuously and without censure from the

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group to which these people belong; but for many morally sensitive people the sexual impulses as such are sources of nervous tension, emotional conflict, and a sense of shame and guilt.

The sexual urge ripens spontaneously in the teens and as a natural force recognizes no barriers, injunctions, and conventions. It clamors for expression. Unless carefully instructed, boys and girls in the early teens do not know what attitude to take toward this powerful instinct and how to regulate it. Unfortunately, in many homes the sexual desire and its gratification are still regarded as a forbidden topic of discussion. Sexuality is veiled by too many parents in a secrecy which is partial, misleading, and harmful. To meet questions of boys and girls concerning sexuality with evasions, fictions, and reproofs is to arouse in the minds of the youthful inquirers the impression that they are considered evil and vile. Under such conditions the youth learns what is called the facts of life on the street or school ground.

The chief objective of sex instruction of those who have acquired a partial and unwholesome conception should be to relieve the sexual life of the taint of vulgarity which has been attached to it. Account for it as we may, this natural function has been degraded to an experience momentarily pleasurable yet vile, but still necessary for the propagation of living creatures. Why not frankly acknowledge that sexual desire exists, that it varies in intensity with different people, that so far from being indecent, it is an urge which, if properly guided, ennobles man? Why not admit that the sexual life of man serves two purposes—the production of children and the gratification of the desire

of normal love? Why not teach that the natural and wholesome sexual life of married people should be free from shame and from undue repression? The connection of vulgarity, vileness, and wickedness with sexual relations can be broken only by dragging the demons of prudery and ignorance from their dark caves and slaying them with common sense.

PERILS OF EXTRA-MARITAL INFLUENCE

Be it said with all possible emphasis that sexual relations can occur with the approval of the community and the highest degree of mutual satisfaction to respectable partners only in the state of matrimony. To say the least, the fear of detection by scandalmongers of illicit relations and the possibility of pregnancy make the extra-marital experience furtive, depressing, and degrading. The hazard of venereal disease should not be dismissed with a gesture of contempt. Many a youth and maiden have contracted such a pernicious ailment in an hour when discretion was abandoned. After all, the union of two persons who have vowed to be true to each other, forsaking all others, who are developing family life, working side by side in community enterprises, and rearing children is the best arrangement for the welfare of couples which has been devised throughout the centuries. There is no adequate substitute for the family.

Marriage with all its difficulties has not been retired by a more satisfactory relationship. Free love, trial matrimony, and emotional vacations of married people, with their implied or actual sexual liberties and excesses, end in disgust and disillusionment if those who indulge in them are intel-

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ligent, even when pregnancy, venereal disease, and exposure have been successfully avoided. Those who advocate these practices and adopt them without pang of conscience or the ordinary accompanying physical perils are victimized by their folly far beyond what they suspect. They become sexually unbalanced, unstable, abnormal, and erratic. They may become sensualists, be devoured by an abnormal sexual appetite never completely satisfied. The normal love life may not satisfy; and the promiscuous relations, although craved and actually indulged in, only tantalize.

Although I should be the last to defend the institution of marriage for the sexual satisfaction a normal union affords, the fact supported by the experience of centuries remains that only within the framework of matrimony can the sexual urge be released without risks which no one in his right mind would take. I am of course supposing that both partners are free from venereal disease and do not consider pregnancy under ordinary conditions a tragedy. Furthermore, only in the state of matrimony can partners who are morally alert completely abandon themselves to one another in relaxed frames of mind.

TWO CRITICAL PERIODS

Why does sexual delinquency exist among both single and married people? Attention has already been called to the sexual urge as a primary instinct. There is only one motivating force which is stronger and more insistent, and that is the recurring craving for food for the body. Only nutrition is physically more fundamental than sexuality in healthy people. The sheer urgency, the very pressure,

of the instinct of sex makes it hard to discipline. Its recurrent demands are imperious and not easy to deny.

Furthermore, the sexual appetite is especially difficult to control during two periods in the life of the average person—during the late teens and early twenties, and during the late forties. During these two transition intervals the sexual urge is hardest to regulate, although the necessity for managing it may be most imperative. The unmarried youth feels the powerful compulsion at a time when he is least able successfully to cope with it. Nature is demanding that he propagate the species. He is biologically prepared for parenthood; but in so many cases insufficient financial resources make it impossible for him to marry. As a result, he is tempted to indulge in clandestine and unsanctioned, if not promiscuous, sexual relations.

The later critical period is called the menopause, or change of life. It occurs in both sexes. The physical changes are more pronounced in women than in men. At about the age of forty-eight the woman's ability to bear children ceases. For a few years before the menopause has ended she may experience strong sexual desires. If she is married to a man several years older, her excessive sexual ardor may be unsatisfied. She may therefore accuse him of being untrue to her, play the part of a wronged wife, and persecute him with jealousy. She may take a lover. Intensified sexual urges may lead her to ignore reason, to defy the restrictions of society, and to discard the moral code she has for years upheld in principle and practice.

In many cases the unmarried woman who is passing through the change of life experiences desires and engages in practices the origins of which she herself does not under-

stand. Miss Jane Partner was confused by strange longings and impulses. She was unmarried, had taught school for twenty-five years, and been living in a home shared with a married sister. She reported that she had secured a leave of absence from the school board, had resolved to desert her home and to live by herself in an apartment and to do as she pleased in the large city in which she had been teaching. For one whole year she proposed to cast aside the restraints under which she had been living as a school-teacher. She stated that she was impelled by a force which was almost irresistible and for the source and nature of which she could not account.

She consulted me for the sole purpose of ascertaining the reason why she was determined to do the things indicated. When she admitted that she was forty-five, I explained that no doubt she was in the later stages of the menopause and was therefore moved to seek and capture romance before it was everlastingly too late. The knowledge of the mysterious powers active within her with which I supplied her led to a degree of control which saved her from taking any steps which she probably would have regretted the rest of her life.

As already hinted, a similar mental process is likely to occur in a man in the late forties. Sexual appetite may be sporadic and erratic; it may be practically dormant for an extended period of time and then become vehemently active. If his wife develops an increase of sexual desire at the same time as he does, delinquency is not likely to issue. In fact the temptation to depart from the path of rectitude will probably not assail him. If the wife is reluctant, he may be tempted to seek satisfaction outside the state of

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matrimony. He will at irregular periods be disposed to be sullen, irritable, and emotionally changeable.

He should know that during the few years before middle age with its dignity and regularity arrives, he will now and then feel a strong urge to indulge in a sexual fling. An adequate knowledge of the active propensity as part and parcel of the male climacteric should help him to remain within the bounds of ordinary decency. He should be aware that sexual delinquency is one of the tricks which his personality undergoing the transition from robust manhood to middle age is trying with all its strategy to play on him.

SUNDRY ORIGINS OF SEXUAL TEMPTATION

The other origins of sexual arousal and the unwholesome forms of sexual release are numerous. Curiosity occasionally motivates sexual irregularity. The lure of the unknown, the desire to explore, inquisitiveness, rather than lust itself, often lead to sexually improper conduct. The desire to know the nature of sexuality by personal experience in many cases prompts the unacceptable deed. After curiosity has been satisfied, a feeling of betrayal and emptiness depresses the victim. Sexuality apart from the multifarious interests of family life is sooner or later disappointing. The gratification of sexual curiosity with its oppressive consequences may, in fact, give rise to the conception that one has been grossly deceived. The fixed belief that the sex instinct is the great deceiver makes the normal love life in wedlock impossible.

The overwhelming longing of a man or a woman to find the perfect mate often occasions sexual adventure

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which, in turn, culminates in disgrace and disappointment. Many an Adam, although not intolerably mismated, seeks his Eve, the perfect companion and sexual partner, only to discover that the women with whom he successively consorts are human, limited in allure and in capacity to satisfy his deepest craving for identification with himself. At long last, he may draw the conclusion that after all his wife, the woman who has borne his children, nursed him when he was ill, supported him when misfortune overtook him, and tolerated his faults, merits his loyalty, devotion, and unswerving affection. Many a man has tasted the bitter dregs of disappointment because in order to possess the other woman who he fancied was his predestined mate he divorced his wife. Conversely, the same may be said of many an Eve. The perfect Adam and Eve do not exist, and the sooner men and women learn this fact and adjust themselves to it the better.

The sheer love of excitement is misleading. For the same reason that boys break windows, climb trees, steal rides on trains and trucks, and hector schoolteachers, many young people yield to sexual promptings. The wish for excitement, although not an instinct, is nevertheless a fundamental drive with which we should reckon. Boredom, monotony, and lifeless routine have more to do with sexual violation than an uninformed person may suppose. Wholesome recreation safeguards good morals. Investigations disclose that sexual delinquency among young people is materially lessened in communities which provide facilities and leadership for constructive leisure-time programs.

Now and then a person who is overborne by a sense of futility, by the depressing limitations of poverty, or by

the conviction that he is a failure seeks compensation in sexual misdeeds. He tries to end the humiliations which adverse facts and circumstances, whether or not he is responsible for their existence, impose upon him, through the feeling of achievement and conquest which an illicit love relation arouses. Of course, his escape from the disagreeable through unsanctioned sexuality is both temporary and illusory, and often the penalties for taking refuge in such a form of avoidance are severe and a source of future regret. The man who tries to overcome the sting of oppressive inferiority by laying siege to the heart of a woman to whose affections he has no right, or by approaching with dishonorable intentions one who is free, may develop a passing exhilaration and find momentary forgetfulness in excitement, if his designs are successful; but the cause of his deflation, of his insufficiency, has not been removed by his sexual adventure.

The sexual escapade will only add to his burden of defeatism, once conscience is aroused, or he is forced to assume the miserable sequels such as approaching fatherhood, disease, the condemnation of those who are aware of his misconduct, and the demands of the woman whom he does not love that the relationship issue in marriage. Verily, illicit sexuality as a means of bolstering up a deflated personality is one of the most treacherous experiments in which one can engage. Aside from the moral implications, flight from oppressive realities through unwarranted sexuality is one of the chief destroyers of peace of mind, and of effective participation in the life of the community in which the self-betrayed person lives.

The unemployment of the breadwinner of a family

may intensify sexual desire. The seeking of sexual satisfaction as a comfort and substitution for vocational defeat is by no means uncommon. The bodily energies which are not released by hours of work may clamor for an outlet in excessive sexuality. As already indicated, one may attempt to disperse the sense of frustration and uselessness in the world's work by sexual excitement and fulfillment. If the individual's husband or wife, as the case may be in the present topsy-turvy vocational world, is sexually reluctant the emotional conflict is increased. The temptation to find a willing and congenial sexual associate outside the home may assail the one who believes that the normal marital rights have been denied. When both husband and wife take into practical consideration that unemployment may increase sexual appetite, a major tragedy may be avoided. A realistic attitude toward sexual problems and the application of common sense in their solution would save many a husband or wife from disgraceful sexual exploits. The partner who is obtuse, inexcusably ignorant, and non-co-operative, although abstaining from sexual vice, is as culpable as the one who has committed the overt act of infidelity.

THE REGULATION OF THE SEXUAL URGES

What shall we say to young men and women whose circumstances are such that it is necessary to defer marriage? What shall we say to the young woman who feels the promptings of the sex instinct and would make an excellent wife and mother, is eager for family life, but who for some reason has not attracted a suitable man to whom she can give her heart and hand in marriage? What shall we say

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to the ardent woman whose male companion has been removed from her side by the relentless hand of death? What shall we say to the millions of the unmarried who are resolved to live in accordance with a worthy standard of morals, but who are after all only human and periodically experience intense sexual desire?

Nature provides at least partial relief. Menstruation regularly affords young women temporary release from sexual tension. In many cases dreams of love furnish girls an additional outlet. Nature does not leave boys entirely in the lurch. Seminal emissions during dreams restore bodily and mental balance.

Wholesome companionship between the sexes is recommended. The undertaking of projects by young men and women in which the attention is not directed to a member of the opposite sex but to the objective which they seek jointly to attain will absorb the energies of both. Orchestra playing, play writing and staging, outdoor sports, and work are excellent forms of sexual control. If the association of young people results in romantic attraction, the element of sex will naturally be present. Comradeship may lead to love, courtship, and marriage. In fact, companionship on a non-romantic basis not only releases sexual impulses, but is the best-known preliminary to a successful matrimonial enterprise.

The final word must be that men and women are intended for each other and that no absolutely complete substitute for the sex instinct is available. For an urge as fundamental as the sexual there can be no entirely effective substitute among normal people. On the other hand, this mysterious force can be disciplined. The person of

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multiple interests, who works hard, eats only as much as is needful for bodily health, engages in wholesome forms of recreation, avoids sexually stimulating situations, and keeps himself pure for the sake of decency or a future mate, will not succumb to license. In fact, in wedlock itself sexual desire should be made the servant rather than the master of men and women.

Hunger, anger, and the sex instinct are elemental internal forces which all normal personalities incorporate. Their urgency and intimacy make it difficult to understand and properly utilize them. In fact, the three form a conspiracy which is likely to play woeful tricks on us. The sex instinct is a kind of hunger, a craving for physical and spiritual union which, once it is gratified, results in a sense of relaxed appeasement akin to the feeling one has after having eaten a balanced meal. Anger may prompt one to fight for food which hunger demands, or to contest a rival for the favor of a woman and to appropriate her by force. The understanding and disciplining of these primary powers will provide considerable knowledge and promote the control of other internal forces which tend to clash among themselves and to defy the mandates of society. When two or three of these fundamental urges working together are given full and undisputed sway, the individual is betrayed.

NERVOUSNESS

WHAT is called nervousness is a common complaint. The symptoms of this abnormality range all the way from "just feeling miserable" to horrible imaginings and the panic of fear. Many people refer to almost any deviation from the normal which renders them unhappy, such as anxiety, a sense of the emptiness of life, or of failure or sleeplessness, as a nervous condition. In this discussion we shall restrict the use of the term "nervousness" to undue susceptibility to dread, extreme lack of poise, loss of control of the emotions, inability to respond effectively to the ordinary demands of life, confusion of mind over trifles, and fidgetiness.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BENIGN NERVOUSNESS

One of the most familiar manifestations of nervousness is the incessant change of bodily position and a restlessness that drives the victim from place to place—in fact, an incapacity to sit still or remain content for a reasonable length of time in one locality. Repose, serenity, composure, the comparatively frictionless adaptation to disagreeable circumstances, and clear thinking are far removed from the

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nervous disposition. In extreme cases the nervous individual feels as if he were literally going to explode, become violently insane, or commit a shocking crime.

Another symptom of extreme nervousness is preoccupation with imaginary or real grievances. The sufferer seems to be incapable of performing routine duties. For example, the housewife who is persuaded that she has been wronged and is nervous may be unable to set the table. She may wander between the pantry and the table, forgetting what she has done and what she should do next. On the other hand, she may spend hours complaining to her neighbors or keeping a diary. The function of attention is not suspended; she is simply devoting herself to her own turmoil to the exclusion of her work. She may find this procedure more agreeable than doing her housework. If her husband and children are alarmed by her behavior and indulge her she may indefinitely prolong her nervousness. The recognition and sympathy which her condition wins may give her a morbid sense of importance.

What many people mean by being nervous is a temporary seizure or fear induced by undertaking something new, novel, or unaccustomed. The bridegroom may be nervous at his wedding. The person who is a passenger on board an ocean liner for the first time in his life may become uneasy and perturbed when land is lost sight of and the waves roll high. The motorist from a rural district may become so nervous when his automobile is in the congested traffic of a large city that he loses control of himself and of the vehicle. The individual who is not used to public speaking may when facing an audience experience dryness of the throat and inability to recall what he has so carefully

prepared to say, stammer, halt, and take his seat, trembling and humiliated. These are instances of passing fears which cripple effective action and render the victim ludicrous if they do not make him the object of sympathy. The sufferer is prone to declare that such vexations make him nervous.

Annoyances and nuisances make one nervous. The crying of an infant, the raucous sound of the horn of a motor vehicle, the blare of a neighbor's radio, and the buzzing of a mosquito may produce restlessness, fidgetiness, antagonism, and an active disposition to eliminate the provocation or to escape. Minor unpleasantnesses, to say nothing of recognized major perils when they persist or are repeated for some time, are likely to rob one of poise and patience and to arouse a feeling compounded of vexation, petulance, and fretfulness.

Nervousness is easily communicated. A nervous person generally makes another nervous. A nervous mother reproduces her condition in the baby in her arms. If she is upset, disturbed, and agitated, it will not be long before the baby's body will twitch, his arms and legs be in spasmodic motion, and his wail fill the house. A nervous teacher is likely to excite, distract, and depress her pupils to such an extent that they are unable to learn their lessons. I know a physician who is made so nervous by a fidgety patient that he is unable to function professionally. Nervousness, like the measles, can be caught.

As a rule, the nervous person, unless physically ill, suffers his most tense and tortured hours in the morning. One might suppose that after the rest of the night, unless too many hours of sleeplessness have elapsed, the nervous individual would be calmer and more collected and better

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able to control himself and to manage his personal affairs. The contrary is the case. Every morning the nervous person battles afresh with his depressing conditions. As the day progresses he gains a measure of self-restraint with abatement of tension. At night when sleep overtakes him the control he has acquired during the day is surrendered; hence the greater degree of nervousness in the morning. Many nervous people move in a vicious cycle; they awake facing life with anxiety, conquer to some extent their nervousness as the hours pass, and then suffer a relapse at night.

NERVES AND NERVOUSNESS

Some cases of what is called nervous collapse are in reality the outcome of the degeneration of the nerves, spinal cord, and brain. Lesions of the nervous system, or the destruction of nerve cells, account for a limited percentage of cases of nervousness. The percentage is, however, relatively small; for most cases of nervous disorders, so-called, are no more connected with any part of the nervous system than with the mythical man in the moon.

As indicated, there may be a change in the substance of the nerves, spinal cord, or brain. The nerves are like electric or telephone wires; they carry impulses and messages to the central directing agency, which in some instances is the spinal cord and in others an area of the brain. Nervous energy—that is, vitality of the nerves, spinal cord, and brain—may be lowered by certain diseases. Intense nervous fatigue may follow an infectious disease like influenza. Prolonged periods of weeping without apparent reason often characterize this form of nervous interference.

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Such nervousness is marked by vague pains, obscure aches, and often by indigestion. The victim is likely to be deeply concerned about his health. Perhaps the most outstanding symptom of actual nerve impairment is lack of physical energy and bodily weariness after slight exertion. In fact, the individual is unable to do strenuous work of any kind, mental or manual, for any length of time. If he goes to his place of employment, he may be exhausted after a short period of work. If he forces himself to continue working, his accomplishments are tragically meager; the law of diminishing returns operates. The emotional life of the one suffering from true exhaustion is upset. The emotional tone is dark and melancholy. Joy, good will, confidence in himself and others, and courage are conspicuously absent. Life loses its savor, its zest, its charm and allurements. Appetite is poor, and sleep fitful.

FATIGUE NERVOUSNESS

That some nervous people actually suffer from bodily fatigue should not be denied. Intense and prolonged emotions, such as hate, jealousy, and anxiety, are exhausting. They consume an amount of energy which makes one fidgety, depressed, and weak. Confusion and worry may bring about a collapse. Furthermore, it is actually possible to overwork. Contrary to widely spread opinion, work, however conducive to normality, does really diminish the stores of vitality one possesses. If one utilizes bodily strength, day after day, month after month, faster than it can be replenished in the necessary periods of recuperation, one result may be a state of distress called nervousness.

Nourishing food, rest, and appropriate recreation will

cure most of these cases; the complicated mental treatment of a specialist in nervous diseases may be needless. To be sure, individuals vary in the amount of bodily vitality at their disposal which they can generate in a given time and under favorable conditions. Some are able without undue fatigue to do twice as much work in the same time as others. Those who are less generously endowed with physical strength and powers of recuperation should not compete with the more hardy and vigorous. The wise man ascertains how much work he can do and lives at least life's allotted span of threescore and ten years, unless he prefers to wear himself out by overwork and take the consequences.

George Gravel, a high school boy, was so nervous that he fairly squirmed in a chair in the classroom. His hands passed in unending procession through his hair. He crossed, uncrossed, and recrossed his legs. His features twitched. His eyes were bloodshot. He was underweight. In conversation he wandered from one topic to another which had no apparent connection. The high school principal's investigation brought to light the fact that George, in order to attend school, worked seven hours six nights a week in an automobile factory. Insufficient rest, defective diet, and an amount of work which depleted his energies made him nervous. The principal outlined a program of study and gainful work to which the boy was equal. In less than two months what was considered a case of frayed nerves yielded to the suitable routine recommended by the principal. George was relaxed and could concentrate his attention on topics of conversation until they were fully discussed. He gained weight. He was a self-possessed, cheerful, and normal schoolboy. His scholarship markedly improved.

Even animals suffer from nervous tension. An abused horse, one which is whipped and otherwise maltreated, exhibits nervousness in the presence of his tormentor. Experiments on dogs which have been conducted in the interests of science have resulted in the collapse of these intelligent and faithful creatures. For example, a dog fed only when a tone of a certain pitch is sounded eventually secretes saliva at the sound of the tone alone. At first he will secrete saliva in anticipation of food when a higher or lower tone is heard. If no food is given unless the dog responds to the particular tone selected by the experimenter, the animal will soon not secrete saliva when another tone is produced. The experimenter may gradually bring the basic, or food-securing, tone and another closer together in pitch. When the dog is unable to discriminate the one tone from the other, repeatedly responds to the wrong one with salivation, and is therefore not fed, he becomes confused and weary. He may become a nervous wreck. He can be restored to health by rest and nourishment. In such a case the body of the dog as a whole rather than just the nerves seems to be affected.

ORGANIC AILMENTS AS SOURCES

Nervousness, as implied, is often the effect of a bodily ailment or condition. People who are anemic—that is to say, whose blood is deficient in the iron-colored ingredient of the red corpuscles known as hemoglobin—complain of shattered nerves. A good blood tonic prescribed by a competent physician and taken according to directions increases the amount of hemoglobin which, in turn, carries oxygen to the cells of the body. The result of such treat-

ment when it is required is the restoration of the individual to bodily health and mental normality. Before the blood test is taken and adequate treatment prescribed, the patient is down-hearted, actually weak physically, and prone to agonies which are mentally real but difficult to describe. With proper medical care the patient's physical vitality increases, his outlook on life becomes more cheerful, and his fears subside.

Many cases of nervous irritability are produced by a faulty diet. Milk and its products contain food elements which end this form of nervousness. Furthermore, daily exposure of the naked skin to sunshine or the sun lamp for hours at a stretch is soothing because it supplies the body with an ingredient necessary to health. If it is impossible to take such a simple treatment, the family physician may prescribe a remedy which can be taken by mouth. Of course the consumption of more milk and the taking of sun baths or a drug as a substitute, as advised by a medical examiner, may greatly accelerate recovery from nervousness induced by certain dietary and other physical deficiencies.

Disease of almost any sort may make the sufferer nervous. When the organs of the body are not functioning properly the balance of the physical and mental is disturbed. It is not strange that the individual feels miserable, is pre-occupied with himself, has sensations which torture him although he cannot describe them, is restless, easily provoked, and hesitates to make decisions which are either important or inconsequential.

James Conrad was a sick man although he was able to do a limited amount of farm work periodically. Now and then he had onsets which he and an unenlightened

physician concluded were heart attacks. A later and more thorough medical examination revealed that Mr. Conrad had for years been the victim of a diseased gall bladder. For months before this diagnosis was established and he was taken to the hospital for the required surgical operation, he was in mental torments. He reported that trivialities, which he either absorbed without distress or ignored when he was well, made him tremble from head to foot, produced a cold sweat, and aroused a state of annoyance and a sense of injustice. If his wife or children inadvertently said or did anything that even slightly chafed him, his "frayed nerves" would move him, against his will and better judgment, to resort to vehement language and outbursts of temper.

He told me that the knowledge that he was nervous and frequently lost control of himself tortured him almost beyond endurance. He knew that he had been normal, had been sensible and patient, and had met the emergencies of life with courage and adequate resources. The very awareness of the difference between what he had been and his nervous condition humiliated him in his own eyes and increased his lack of stability. When I requested him to discuss the nature of his nervous periods, he replied that all he could report was that they defied description but were the most terrifying experiences imaginable. Of course, after the gall bladder was removed and he had regained his health and strength, his mind no longer played tricks on him, and he was his former cheerful, considerate, and effective self.

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NERVOUS REACTION TO CAFFEINE AND NICOTINE

Overdoses of coffee, tea, and tobacco may produce a nervous reaction. The active element in tea and coffee is mildly stimulating to most people, but to some it is extremely exciting. In some cases the use of tea and coffee retards digestion and in an indirect manner induces sleeplessness, restlessness, and an emotional disturbance. On the other hand, the mere belief that coffee or tea will rob one of sleep is responsible for more cases of insomnia than the chemical action of these beverages. The fixed idea that the drinking of tea or coffee will keep one awake at night is likely to produce the anticipated effect, even if a small quantity has been taken.

The healthy body is able to absorb a certain amount of nicotine, which is the active principle of tobacco. When more nicotine is introduced into the body than can readily be assimilated or eliminated, nervousness is a resultant. The nervous smoker smokes one cigarette after another; in fact, he is likely to discard a half-burned cigarette only to light another after a short time, and to repeat the process. The ash tray is likely to contain a mass of only partly smoked cigarettes. He is the victim of a cycle which consists of a series of cravings for nicotine followed by a succession of revolts of the human body which is unable to absorb the quantity of the tobacco element. So far from being diminished, nervous tension is thus actually multiplied. He smokes to excess and becomes nervous, smokes still more to quiet his nervousness, but in so doing only increases it. The first thing he does in the morning and the last thing at night is to use tobacco. A pastor reports that several

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women in the community in which he serves declare that they do not attend church because they are unable to refrain from smoking for the period occupied by divine worship. They seemingly do not realize that smoking too much, to say the least, contributes to nervousness.

I am afraid that I cannot speak a good word for Lady Nicotine. On the other hand, if a man is devoted in moderation to cigarette, pipe, or cigar, who am I ruthlessly to attempt to deprive him of his pacifier? It may afford him solace and companionship which make the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune more endurable. The melancholy fact persists that a large percentage of smokers become excessive devotees of tobacco. The habit seems to become more and more deeply entrenched, and one smokes with increasing frequency. It is said that the average number of cigarettes smoked each day is eleven by women addicts and twenty by men, and that the majority are drifting to a larger daily consumption. The purpose of soothing the nerves is progressively defeated, for tension increases with the overplus of nicotine injected into the body.

THE CONQUEST OF TOBACCO ADDICTION

How can the pernicious habit of smoking be broken? In order to demonstrate that they are masters of their appetites many smokers deliberately and successfully abandon the use of tobacco for a few weeks each year. Surely, it should not be difficult for them permanently to forsake the noxious weed.

The inveterate smoker who has a deep-seated longing for deliverance may choose one of two other methods. When the smoker is ill, tobacco is distasteful, and smoking

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is temporarily suspended. When he recovers, tobacco begins to resume its former place in the routine of living. If the addict after a brief illness, say a cold, which has confined him to his home and interfered with his customary activities simply continues to do without tobacco he is cured. During the period of enforced abstinence the craving for tobacco is dissipated, the habit of smoking is involuntarily disrupted; after convalescence why return to servile subjection?

The second method is more complicated, but if faithfully applied by the smoker who at heart craves release it is fully as effective. The core of the procedure is the interference with the mechanism of the habit of smoking. The entire series of habitual acts which smoking entails is disturbed.

Every cigar, pipe, or cigarette involves, respectively, the same set of performances. For example, the cigar is extracted from the humidor, box, or pocket; the end is bitten or cut off; it is placed between the lips; a match is struck; the smoke is drawn into the mouth and expelled; the process of suction and expulsion is repeated until the cigar has been consumed and the stub discarded. Now if the cigars or cigarettes or the pipes are transferred to a different place, the act of obtaining one will vary from the habitual behavior. If matches are kept in another pocket or other receptacle, interference with the customary act of retrieving them is offered. If a delay between securing that which is to be smoked and lighting a match is deliberately caused, a further disturbance of habitual performance occurs. If the tobacco in the form used is by an act of the will laid aside before it is consumed or desire for it has evaporated, the mechanism of smoking is seriously deranged. This

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method has permanently emancipated many men from the tobacco evil a few months after its adoption.

Those who have discarded the use of tobacco state that they sleep more soundly, cease coughing, have a keener appetite, smell more acutely, have a better taste in the mouth, and, above all, feel that they have recovered self-mastery. After all, tobacco plays tricks on us the nature of which we should learn. So far from increasing efficiency, it actually diminishes it; it does not sharpen the wits but dulls them, it does not increase muscular strength but undermines it. It shortens life. The smoker is disposed to disregard the rights of those to whom the smell of tobacco is offensive; to say the least, he tends to become careless of the preferences and the claims of others. He is likely to be discourteous. One can break the habit if one really wants deliverance and chooses a method which is suitable to the type of personality.

NERVOUS INTERFERENCE IN THE HOME SITUATION

One of the most prolific sources of nervousness of the child or youth is parental dissension in his presence. When one is overstimulated by a home charged with parental friction, personality disorders of a serious nature are likely to be the outcome in the years to come. When the child is induced or feels compelled to take sides in the state of antagonism which exists between his parents, he experiences to his own injury excessive love for one and excessive hatred for the other. The nervous system of the child who grows up in such an atmosphere is unduly stimulated. He becomes fidgety, morose, restless, fearful, confused, and generally wretched.

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Ruth Wall, who is eighteen years old, writes that she is between two fires. Her parents quarrel over the slightest details in her presence. Day by day a feud between them arises, and after angry words have been exchanged they effect a reconciliation. Ruth says she has become so nervous that she often drops whatever she is holding in her hands. When she calls the attention of her father or mother to the havoc parental disputes are creating in her life, to the unhappiness and lack of self-control which these exhibitions are producing, she is told that their conflicts are none of her business. Her parents seem to derive an abnormal pleasure from their clashes and the subsequent reconciliations, but do not understand or care that they are harming their daughter, who witnesses these scenes with alternating feelings of pain and disgust.

Many an adult is able to trace his instability, lack of a sense of security, and what he calls his battered nerves to his upbringing in a home where father and mother openly lashed each other with epithets of scorn, which were soon forgotten by them but remembered by him. The words of endearment which followed mutual recriminations may have given his parents enjoyment, but they only bewildered and nauseated the innocent offspring and increased his present and future nervousness.

The ground of nervousness may be unreasonable parental expectations. Far too many parents are unwisely ambitious for their children. They goad them to excessive efforts to achieve what they are not by nature and inclination and previous training capable of accomplishing. A father may resolve that his son should be a lawyer, whereas the boy is mechanically gifted and, if left to chart his own

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course, would become a carpenter. A mother may insist that her daughter become a schoolteacher, although the girl dislikes teaching and prefers to cook and bake and sew and do other forms of housework. Parental interference with the affairs of children often produces extreme fatigue, irritability, and lack of sound judgment. When parents try to force their children into patterns which are foreign to their desires and natural capacities, the children are likely to lead abnormal lives, unless they stage a constructive revolution against their misguided fathers and mothers. No child should become a member of a given profession for the sole reason of gratifying parental vanity.

On the other hand, a multitude of men and women are nervous wrecks because they have been vocationally depressed by their parents. An automobile mechanic who should be a lawyer is a tragic figure. A young woman doomed by her parents to be a stenographer, although she could have become a successful organist if her parents had permitted her to develop her musical talents, is a pathetic and frustrated person. All work that is useful is honorable, but the child should be encouraged and guided in the selection of that vocation which is congenial and for which he has the necessary aptitude lest nervousness and unhappiness result. Parents should beware lest their minds play injurious tricks on the personalities of their children.

CULTIVATED NERVOUSNESS

Other cases of nervousness are directly traceable to a detestable attempt to escape the responsibilities which life assigns. Morbid attitudes are developed. A representative of this type of nervousness is too lazy or too cowardly to face

critical situations and quite unintentionally resorts to strange assortments of excuses. The individual wants to evade accountability, and his mind becomes his accomplice. The mind by hook or crook conspires to induce conditions which do not interfere with his idea of respectability. The woman who detests housework develops nameless fears, headaches, and an unwholesome attitude toward life, which in her own sight excuse her from performing odious tasks. A laborer who prefers temporary support from the government to what he can earn by the sweat of his brow may plead that he is physically worn out and incapacitated. A schoolboy may become melancholy, listless, and lose his appetite because parents and teachers, being deceived by his state of mind, will relieve him of study which he abhors.

Mrs. John Wilson, a farmer's wife, died leaving, in addition to her husband, a daughter Mary, nineteen years old, and two young children aged eight and six respectively. Mary's father, a stalwart man who wrested a precarious living from a New England farm, expected her to keep house and to be a mother to the younger children. Although Mary was a physically strong young woman, and fully capable of performing the inherited duties, she had a dislike for housekeeping. She liked to read novels, imagining herself to be the beautiful heroine who, after proving by her experience that the path of true love is rough, at last sinks into the arms of her knightly lover. In order to be relieved of the monotony and drudgery of housework and of giving the younger children the care they needed, Mary became nervous. She complained of jangled nerves, of being on the point of "flying to pieces," of sleeplessness, of being worn out and incapable of doing the work which

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her mother had done without murmuring and fretting. Her father, as she had anticipated, was alarmed and, although he could hardly afford the expense, employed a maid of all work. Mary retreated to her romantic novels, but, with the cunning that such nervous people have, posed as a sick young woman to a degree calculated to worry her father so that he would indefinitely retain the services of a maid.

DREAD OF HEIGHTS

Some people are nervous when they are standing on high places. They are seized with a nameless dread lest they lose their balance and plunge from the height. Many of them experience vertigo, a swimming of the head, dizziness, when they ascend to unaccustomed altitudes. In fact, a large number of people of imagination and proneness to fear are nervous when they stand on the top of a stepladder. The nervous tension is unreasonable, but it persists unless the victim takes himself in hand and conquers his fear by ascending from lower to higher and higher elevations by stages.

Now and then a person becomes so nervous when he has reached a high elevation that he acts as if he were possessed by a foreign and malignant power. Mr. Jonathan Larkin, an educated and cultured man fifty-five years old, went motoring with three gentlemen. He enjoyed the trip until they started to drive up the spiral highway of a mountain. He attempted to grasp the steering wheel and criticized the driver. The farther the automobile progressed the more abusive he became; in fact he became so violent that the other two were compelled to restrain him by ap-

plication of physical force. When the summit of the mountain was reached he became sullen and refused to leave the automobile with the others in order to view the scenery.

His fellow travelers became so alarmed that they held a consultation and determined to bind his wrists together if he became unmanageable by moral persuasion on the return trip. Before the descent was attempted the doors of the automobile were locked. Mr. Larkin repeated his distressing behavior as soon as the first downward curve was negotiated. He maligned the competent driver and again tried to seize the steering wheel. The other two overpowered him and bound his wrists together as planned. When the bottom of the mountain was reached all were physically exhausted and mentally upset.

A conversation with his brother a few days later disclosed that fifteen years before he had had a similar experience with Jonathan. When told of his violent behavior and of the restraints imposed upon him by his two friends, Mr. Larkin seemed surprised. He could not believe that he had been so nervous and had behaved so badly that force had to be employed to prevent him from injuring himself and others. He admitted that being on a height always threw him into a nervous panic. We could not excavate the origins of his nervous apprehension and his deeds of violence. Perhaps a frightening childhood experience long forgotten motivates his irrational conduct on elevations.

Why should a person be more nervous five hundred feet above the ground than three hundred? A fall from the latter height would be as fatal as one from the former. The steel worker walks across a narrow girder twenty stories high with the same calmness and self-assurance with

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which he saunters across one only five stories high, and rightly so. He feels less nervous and safer working on horizontal units of the steel framework of a building than he does crossing a crowded street. A man will walk the length of a plank eight or ten inches wide lying on the ground. Raise the plank twenty feet, support both ends firmly, and the same man may be too nervous to walk it. Imagination is stronger than reason; hence the nervous interference.

SUBCONSCIOUS EXPRESSION IN DREAMS

As hinted above, many nervous people sleep fitfully and have fearsome dreams. Horrifying dreams, one is inclined to believe, do not originate in an actual deterioration of the nerves, spinal cord, or brain as frequently as they do in remembered or forgotten episodes which have either morally shocked or frightened the individual. The two following instances will amply illustrate the part dreams play in certain types of nervousness.

Jane Clark is about thirty years old, unmarried, has only a grammar school education. She lives with her mother, who is a widow, and her brother. She is unemployed, but has an income sufficient for her material needs. She is extremely nervous, has few friends, is unhappy, and at times contemplates committing suicide. She is a light sleeper and reports dreams of death and funerals, from which she awakes in terror. Analysis disclosed that about six years ago she attended a dance, became intoxicated, and yielded to sexual temptation. In due time she became aware that she was pregnant. Her paramour made arrangements for an abortion in a distant city. The abortion was

performed by a woman who made such an illegal procedure a financially profitable business. A serious infection resulted. Miss Clark was then taken to a hospital for the expert medical aid she so desperately needed. For several days she was on the verge of death, but finally rallied and recovered. Her illicit lover has forsaken her, and she does not know where he is living.

Her conscience condemns her for her rash act of immorality and for the abortion. The fact that she rid herself of a human life, however undeveloped, and the fact that she nearly died from the infection account for the terrifying dreams of death and burial. Full admission of guilt, faith in a forgiving God, gratitude that her life has been spared, blameless conduct, exercise in the open, an active interest in unfortunate people are conspiring to banish nervousness, to reduce the dreadful dreams in intensity and frequency, and to invest living with zest, meaning, and importance. There is no doubt that in the course of time she will be a normal woman again.

Mrs. Thomas Smith is unhappily married. She and her husband are leagues apart in such major matters as religion, the best method of rearing their two young children, and the disbursement of his salary. Each is a well-educated individual, a person of gifts and charm; but incompatibility has made their marriage a dismal failure.

A dream of hers is of special significance. One night she dreamed that she was a passenger on a train which was held up by bandits. The robbers walked down the aisle of the coach in which she was riding. One bandit was changed into a woman (such transformations in dreams are common) who advanced to her side and tried to rob her of

her wedding and engagement rings. The dreamer awoke in terror. The origin and meaning of the dream are transparently clear to the reader of this account. The wife's fear that another woman would usurp her place, that her husband would divorce her and remarry, was dramatized in the dream of the attempted robbery of the symbols of her engagement and wedlock. She continues to be a "nervous wreck."

It should be clear that the word "nervousness" covers a multitude of defects and abnormalities. That the nerves, the spinal cord, and the brain are subject to deterioration in substance and in the purposes they normally serve should be undisputed. On the other hand, the nervous system of the vast majority of persons who are afflicted with what they call nervousness is sound, healthy, and intact. A strange assortment of abnormalities which are popularly considered nervous diseases have no connection at all with the nervous system. The most common cause of ordinary nervousness is a guilty conscience and an attempt to justify misconduct.

MORBID FEARFULNESS

FEAR is a painful emotion of impending danger or evil. Multitudes are driven to desperation by the lash of fears. Certain fears are aroused by known specific objects, situations, or ideas. Others are produced by causes too vaguely comprehended to be of service or not at all identified.

To go through life tortured by fear is to lead an existence of continuous apprehension, dread, and unhappiness. The fearful personality is harassed, confused, and depressed. Efficiency is lowered, if not entirely destroyed. Thinking is unreliable. The one in the grip of fear is a shrinking, shriveling creature who would be ludicrous if he were not such a pathetic and tragic figure.

COMMON AGITATIONS AND ALARMS

The statement, often made, that most of our fears are groundless is comforting and true; but it obscures the fact that many of the dreadful experiences we have are founded on solid facts. Our worst fears may be rooted in inescapable realities that no amount of self-deception can bring to naught and no degree of skill surmount. Afraid that he is

afflicted with an incurable cancer, a person consults a physician whose diagnosis may confirm the patient's alarm. The dreaded disease, the existence and fatality of which are scientifically established by the medical examination, will not take wings and disappear if the victim repeats the formula that most of our fears are foolish tricks a playful mind is playing on gullible individuals. The existence of fearsome circumstances and conditions should be frankly recognized.

Not that fear should be allowed to dominate and shatter the personality. Nobody ought to be afraid to die. A wholesome view of life absorbs death, the fate which will overtake all sooner or later, and strikes down the most devastating fears. After all, in the final analysis, any fear is occasioned by man's aversion to his partial or complete annihilation. However useless or senseless a fear may be, such as the fear of crashing thunder, it is a painful response to the fancied threat of the impairment or extinction of his earthly life. To be sure, only when the circumstances in which a person is entangled are so distressing and grievous that every vestige of hope to overcome them has been abandoned, does the victim cry out for relief in death. Expected calamities, despite the faint hope that they will not occur, may descend upon us with more injurious results than we feared; but some things are worse than death. Man endowed by courage conquers death itself, the last enemy that even the saint must face.

It is true that many of the troubles which we anticipate with paralyzing fear never come to pass. On the other hand, we exhibit a decided tendency to exaggerate ordinary fears, to develop dreads out of proportion to their causes or

possible usefulness. The fear that disease germs may be transferred from doorknobs, money, and other objects which a person touches with his hands, and that a serious if not fatal malady will be thus contracted may become so pronounced as to become abnormal. It is possible to be so sanitary as to be unbrotherly and afraid to assume the ordinary health risks of associating with other people and handling what they have physically touched. The fact that others are exposed to the hazards that such a fearful one himself creates, is generally overlooked by him. It is not likely that he regards himself as a menace to the health of other persons with whom he comes into intimate contact.

Perhaps no person, however normal, is wholly fearless. Nobody endowed with a wealth of emotion and imagination is always and under all conditions altogether unafraid. Only those who are extremely deficient mentally, who are subnormal—more animal than human—are without dreads. Sensitive and fanciful people brood over the injuries of the past and fret about dangers, real and imaginary, of the future. Only those of low mentality and the animals, once they have escaped from danger, seem to forget their past plight, and do not appear to anticipate the possible hazards that they can possibly experience. Only the man gifted with a productive mind clings to a fearsome memory and looks forward with horror to worse evils that may befall him. Such a one should learn how to conquer fear lest it blast his personality and reduce him to a nervous and quivering mass of apprehension.

It would be folly not to be afraid of certain things, such as live wires, recklessly driven motor trucks and rattlesnakes. Only the foolhardy man walks from one part to another of

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a darkened and unfamiliar house—his brashness may result in falling down the basement stairs. The prudent man entertains protective fear. Knowledge of life's dangers should not lead to destructive anxiety, but to caution. To take reasonable precautions against preventable perils is one thing; a chronic condition of anxiety is quite another. The former permits wholesome and hearty participation in the normal affairs of this life; the latter induces such a state of nervous interference that the individual is likely to become the victim of the very things he seeks to escape.

WORLD TURMOIL AND WORRY

Worry, or debilitating anxiety, is properly considered a major disease of modern times. Worry is extended fear, a relatively constant state of painful anticipation of imminent peril. It consumes an exorbitant amount of nervous energy. It harasses many of its victims to premature death. Horrible imaginings characterize certain forms of insanity and chaotic mentality. Extreme types of fear undermine mental health without performing for the victim a commensurate service. In fact, protracted intense fear brings about bodily diseases, especially disorders of the digestive system.

It is not strange that large masses of the world's population are timorous, unstable, and fearful. The inherited social structure has been disowned and discredited. The modern industrial order, the machine age, has created problems which we have not yet solved. For example, the use of labor-saving machinery has made it possible to raise more food on less acreage, which has resulted in agricultural complications. Myriads of men are troubled and anxious

because of existing political economic confusion. The sources of political confidence have collapsed in many countries which have undergone rapid and radical changes in government. What were generally regarded as firmly established political principles have been abandoned, and new and untried theories have been accorded their place.

A period of industrial and political upheaval necessarily involves uncertainty which in turn breeds widespread fear. Far too many of us have yet to learn that in this shifting and drifting world transitions from existing forms of government to others are always occurring. Each period of human history has been marked by greater or lesser changes; men and nations are ever in process of alteration. The earthly security of the individual can be achieved only through understanding, initiative, industry, and a world view which absorbs without too great strain the shocks which fundamental social changes produce. Fear will chill the heart of every thinking man who lives in a dissolving world, until he fortifies himself with the character and mental qualities which are independent of outward terrorizing conditions. Courage, enterprise, and an adequate view of life can deliver a modern man from the chains which a rapidly changing social order with its hazards has forged.

The primitive response to a painful situation is physical flight. It may be justifiable to take to one's heels upon the approach of a physical danger which cannot be evaded. We are living in a world in which it is impossible for anybody to flee from all conditions which arouse fear and anxiety. When escape from the fearsome is impossible, the undisciplined man is likely to do one of two things: he may be nerved by the courage of desperation to combat a

danger, or he may be paralyzed by terror and therefore fall an easy victim to the object of fear. Either response is a defective method of meeting danger. In the one case the individual is too excited to muster his resources and to bring them to bear upon the situation in such a way that deliverance is accomplished; in the other case the person is so cowed by fear that he is overcome and abjectly surrenders to the menace to his security. Only the man who has learned self-control in the school of life faces danger bravely and determines what action should be taken.

THE PERSISTENCE OF IRRATIONAL FEARS

Superstitious fears still abound. Even among educated people, fears born of superstition are prevalent. It is estimated that one-half of all college graduates of this country entertain superstitions. Despite the progress of science, the diffusion of knowledge, and the spread of the belief that a friendly Power rules the universe, superstitious dreads persist. Superstitions inherited from parents and others are hard to discard; what we have acquired in childhood hold us adults in active remembrance. One recalls the superstitious fear that thirteen is an unlucky number—although would you not prefer thirteen dollars to twelve?—that to begin a new project on Friday is to invite disaster, that misfortune will befall him who walks under a ladder or spills salt at the table or looks at the moon over the left shoulder or whose path is crossed by a black cat before breakfast. Perhaps the fact that very few men really think, are actually guided by critical intelligence, results in an active tendency to associate in a relation of cause and effect purely coincidental events.

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We may call upon reason to uproot such fears and think we are persuaded that they are baseless; yet when an occurrence connected in popular imagination with bad luck arises, we are haunted by dread. One may ask oneself what is the connection between the crossing of one's path by a black cat and financial loss or bereavement or other misfortune, major or minor, experienced the same day or in the near future. Reason may answer, "None." Despite the correct answer, fearsome doubts are likely to linger and plague one. If one breaks a mirror and has been taught that such an accident is an infallible forerunner of evil, it is noticeable how difficult or impossible it is to stifle the fearsome anticipation. Imagination is stronger than argument.

Not that it is impossible to subdue many varieties of fear. The first step in the conquest of a fear is a knowledge of its source and nature. The origins of many fears are obscure and can be excavated only by a skilled counselor. Unless their causes are exposed and examined, they cannot be eradicated. In many cases a knowledge of how a fear was instilled does not in itself dispel the fear, but it does serve as a necessary point of departure in the campaign against it.

A thoughtless man in what he considered a jovial mood threatened to cut off the ears of a small boy with sheep shears. The boy, thoroughly frightened, ran away as fast as his legs could carry him. He reported the incident to his mother, who ordered him to stop crying and be sensible. A few days later his father proposed to cut his hair. The boy was terrorized by the prospect and refused to occupy the chair and submit to the tonsorial operation. His father

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and others by sheer force placed him in the chair and held him there while his father used ordinary shears. The boy struggled with might and main and tried to descend from the chair. His father quite by accident nipped one of the boy's ears with the shears. The boy's fears were in part realized.

From that day for many years having his hair cut was an ordeal, an experience attended by fright. A wise friend, who came to his relief, laid bare the reason why he had an abnormal fear of having his ears cut off by a barber. The fact that he learned how the fear arose did not at once release him, but it did show him that his terror was unreasonable. Frequent discussions with his friend of the origin of the fear in a boyhood experience unwisely responded to by both his mother and father made the panic seem foolish and gradually it was absorbed. A frank and full sharing of a fear with an understanding person may lead to the discovery of its source and its subjugation: to say the least, such a course will make the fear less formidable and thus weaken it.

DREAD OF CONFINED SPACES

Fear of insanity and fear of being confined in a place from which there is no escape are numbered among the most devastating fears which plague mankind. Fear lest one be enclosed in a space from which there is no exit is frequently justifiable. To reach the dead-end of a street infested with thugs and thieves, late at night and in the dark, is admittedly dangerous. To be afraid in such a situation can hardly be called senseless or cowardly. On the other hand, there are many circumstances in which the fear

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of being enclosed is abnormal and devitalizing. The number of persons who are frightened when in a company or who refrain from occupying a lower berth on a sleeping car is impressively large.

It is safe to assert that all cases in which people are afraid of being enclosed although no danger is actually present originated in terrifying experiences forgotten or remembered. A fearsome happening in the past is active. Apprehension is aroused whenever the individual is involved in a situation which is consciously or unconsciously associated with the originating occurrence. For example, an adult who as a young child was thrust into a closet for disciplinary purposes may be almost deathly afraid of being in an enclosed space. Parents and teachers should never resort to this form of punishment, lest they lay the foundation for future terrors.

James Wilton was the victim of a typical fear of this sort. He was likely to experience terror in a barber's chair. Often he was seized with a dread so intense that he left the barber's chair with only a partial haircut. After a brisk walk and a desperate effort to allay his fear which he himself considered unreasonable he would return to the barber's for further tonsorial attention. He endured agonies in the dentist's chair, agonies not produced by the operation of the dentist, but by the awareness that for the time freedom of movement was suspended. James was wise enough to consult a friend who understands the nature of such fears, their sources, and how they may be mastered. Upon inquiry the friend learned that when James was a small boy living on a farm he used to go with his father into the fields. While the father worked the boy played. One day while the

father was plowing the boy amused himself playing in a ditch. The boy crawled into a culvert where, to his surprise and terror, he stuck fast. He was unable to extricate himself, although he made desperate efforts. He called lustily for help. It was some time before his father missed him and heard his cries. Not long afterward the father located his son and, appreciating his predicament, seized the boy by the heels and pulled him out of the culvert.

James was told by his understanding friend that the fear of being confined in spaces originated in his boyhood experience and should not unduly influence him in mature life, and that with proper understanding and re-education he would in time be released from its power. He was told that when he was afraid in a barber's chair he was, as it were, a terror-stricken boy stuck in a culvert. In fact, every time he was in the grip of this type of fear he had reverted to his boyhood and relived the producing experience with the original strong emotional accompaniment. The knowledge of the source of his fear of being hemmed in relieved James of the belief, entertained for years, that he was insane or seriously mentally deranged. Such self-understanding did not at once prevent the recurrence of the dreaded moments of anguish. He noticed that the onsets were fewer and lighter when he was in good health. Several manifestations of this type of fear were more easily conquered than others. The less disturbing forms were exterminated first. By degrees he achieved the victory over all the varieties of this form of mental suffering. Free and frequent discussions with another of the source and nature of the fear and its expressions, together with an improvement in health, were the chief destroyers of his dread.

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UNDISCOVERED ORIGINS AND THEIR TREATMENT

In many cases the sufferer cannot recall any incident which is associated with his abnormal fear of being enclosed. Terror seems not to be derived from any past experience that can be remembered. The victim is deluded by the notion that his fear is rooted in a current situation. The agonizing moments are actually derived from the past, but the victim has no recollection of the originating circumstances. In fact, the fear of being confined in a place from which there is no escape may be absent, but the fear of being harmed by other predicaments may be distressingly present.

George Adams was a conscientious worker in an automobile factory. He reports that one day the foreman summoned him to his office. George said he was frightened because he believed he was "in a hole." His breathing was labored, he felt dizzy and faint, he had a choking sensation, his heart seemed to stop beating. The mental anguish of being literally in a hole from which he could not climb was distressingly present before he arrived at the foreman's office. To his surprise the foreman praised him for faithful and efficient services and offered him a promotion.

In such a case permanent relief from terror can be obtained only through the help of a counselor who is skillful enough to bring to light the actual experience by an analysis of the sufferer's life. If the source cannot be recalled, despite the assistance of a counselor, an explanation of how such fears arise and spread to various interests lessens their power. In addition, the sufferer may be advised to concentrate his attention on matters of vital im-

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portance to him, and thus divert his mind from the tension under which it is laboring. Absorption in profitable activities coupled with a knowledge of the general origin of fears of being enclosed will afford relief.

FEAR OF INSANITY

Multitudes stand in paralyzing fear of becoming insane. They are persuaded that they exhibit pronounced symptoms of oncoming or actual collapse of the mind. They cite as evidences the impulse to commit suicide, failing memory, prolonged periods of melancholy, insomnia, and a faulty inheritance. The first thing to be borne in mind is that the fear of becoming insane is proof positive to the contrary. Not that every man who imagines that he is losing his sanity is in perfect mental health. The neurotic, the one who is personally unhappy and unable to make and hold friends, who is generally at odds with the world and is painfully aware of the predicament, is precisely the person who is most likely to believe that he is losing his mind. The insane man is unaware of his tragic condition. He asserts that he is sane and that all others, especially those who take care of him, are insane.

The fear that one will be unable to control the impulse to commit suicide is by no means a symptom of approaching insanity. The man who is tortured by such a dread will not die by his own hand. The man who actually takes his life resorts to suicide as an escape from such depressing circumstances as dire poverty, loneliness, incurable illness, and impending disgrace; that is to say, from circumstances which he does not have the courage to face and overcome or bear. When the outlook for tolerable living is regarded

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as hopeless and when the individual is not sustained by a sound point of view, life may lose its savor and zest, and death be preferable to life. He welcomes death, deliberately plans the method of suicide, and is not terrorized by a compulsion which he cannot control. The notion that one will kill oneself, despite a desire to live, is no indication at all of the deterioration of the mind. Such a person would stoutly defend himself against anybody who attempted to murder him. In fact, he is likely to adopt measures which safeguard health.

Lapses of memory are cited as indications of advancing insanity. Memory is conscious knowledge of past occurrences. Failure to remember and recognize experiences, so far from being a manifestation of insanity, may be the result of such conditions as illness, fatigue, loss of sleep, and overwork. Forgetfulness is the accompaniment of changes which adversely affect the body as a whole. Furthermore, it is characteristic of human beings to forget what is uncomplimentary to them and frequently to recall what is commendatory and even flattering. We write what we prefer to forget on the drifting sands and engrave what we want to remember on granite.

It is true, of course, that the insane may have no conscious and dependable recollection of previous experience. The insane person may harbor a delusion that he is somebody else. Only when the deterioration of the mind is extreme and of long standing does a collapse of memory exist. When such a tragic condition has overtaken the individual, he is not aware of it. An insane man is not conscious of his lack of ability to remember. So long as he believes or actually has evidence that his memory is defec-

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tive or deficient he is sane, although he may not be in perfect mental health. His mind is playing a trick on him when he supposes that memory lapses are unmistakable signs of insanity.

Many are erroneously convinced that insomnia, or prolonged sleeplessness, is a symptom of insanity. It is not at all strange that persons who spend sleepless nights in succession are the prey of a disrupting fear of loss of sanity. The mere awareness that they are seemingly unable to sleep makes them feel that they are different from normal people. The expectation of a sleepless night, and the dread of it, are in themselves likely to induce insomnia. Soon one is the victim of a vicious cycle.

Prolonged inability to obtain a due amount of sleep is the product of insufficient relaxation. Sleeplessness may be the outcome of anxiety and worry, a stinging conscience, or any mental activity which prevents relaxation and composure and keeps an abundance of blood in the brain. Furthermore, it is a fact that the sleep of the brain worker is likely to be fitful unless he takes sufficient physical exercise and learns to relax both body and mind. The slumber of the man who works with his hands and muscles is deep and relatively uninterrupted. He whose vocation is intellectual is prone to envy the manual laborer his sleep. Sleeplessness is, then, far removed from the sad state of insanity.

In fact, absolutely uninterrupted sleep is not experienced by even the person who has been exhausted by bodily toil. We turn from side to side, in order to rest cramped muscles, dozens of times during what we may consider deep and continuous sleep. On the other hand, many who

declare they have not slept a wink all through the night are mistaken. Most people who complain of insomnia sleep part of the night, but are unaware of the lapses into slumber. Cat naps during the day, especially during the early afternoon, may be taken without conscious knowledge of the same. Furthermore, the person who lies in bed quietly, although he does not sleep, rests and thus replenishes his energies. Sleep, to be sure, indicates complete relaxation and forestalls the boredom of lying awake with oneself as the only companion. The mind tries to play the trick on us of making us believe that unless our sleep is deep and extended we are the victims of insanity.

Periods of emotional depression are likely to be interpreted as characteristics of insanity. A state of melancholy may assume the form of a sense of guilt for actual or fancied waywardness. Poverty, disappointment, vocational failure, and matrimonial unhappiness also may occasion dejection. The inability to surmount an obstacle to what is considered success or to make friends may produce despondency. The fear of being or becoming insane is prone to arise in the victim of low spirits. Gloom is not an inevitable sign of the loss of the mind, since it may arise from many other conditions and experiences. It is an undeniable fact that many of the insane are melancholy; but their mental depression is associated with imaginings of an extreme type, such as the delusion of being persecuted and hounded to death, or that others have lost their minds.

Children of the insane are inclined to infer that they will inherit the deterioration of the mind. They live in perpetual fear that they are or will be the victims of hereditary insanity. They assume that insanity may be inherited.

A mental disorder as such is, however, not transmitted from one generation to another by blood inheritance. One may be born with such a sensitive disposition, with a nervous system that is so delicately organized that one may easily acquire personality weaknesses, frailties, peculiarities, and deviations from the normal. In case the individual has inherited a physical basis of mental decadence, and as a consequence loses his mind, he will never be aware of the deterioration of his personality, but will believe that he is normal and sane.

In general, it may be said that the insane person is the victim of a delusion the existence of which he is unaware of and the nature of which he does not understand. The man who is bereft of reason and must be confined in an institution is governed by a grandiose fiction which he has invented and to which he clings despite any evidence to the contrary. The insane person has fled into a world of imagination and unreality. Not all the insane are happy; many of them are tortured by fears. On the other hand, the majority of the insane, fancying themselves rich, famous, or wise, are content. In fact, they are likely to look upon the sane with pity and condescension.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE A PRODUCER OF ANXIETY

It is clear that many fears have their genesis in ignorance or misunderstanding. Mrs. John Work, forty-five years old, was perturbed by the death of several relatives and friends from cancer. Upset and grieved, she lost weight. In a few weeks she developed a gnawing pain in the stomach accompanied by extreme nausea, even if she ate an ordinary balanced meal. She immediately concluded

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that the discomfort with loss of weight was a reliable symptom of cancer of the stomach. She decided to eat as little as possible, hoping against hope to retard the progress of cancer. After a few months Mrs. Work was too weak to walk and was nauseated even by the sight of food. She awaited death.

Her husband, who was naturally alarmed, persuaded her to submit to a thorough medical examination. She was taken to a hospital by ambulance for observation and diagnosis. The physicians failed to discover any evidence of cancer. Mrs. Work was informed that her serious bodily condition was the outcome of emotional depression and starvation. A nurse was charged with the responsibility of inducing the patient to take nourishment. At first Mrs. Work ate only minute portions of food; but when the nurse threatened to use drastic methods, the patient began to eat more. Appetite was created by an increased intake of nutriment. After two weeks she was eagerly looking forward to her meals. She gained in weight, which of course reflected growing well-being. She became cheerful and regarded her fear of having cancer as stupid.

Mrs. Work needed the medical assurance which banished her fears. Proper medical attention when she began to harbor her delusion would have saved her needless anxiety. Furthermore, lack of proper nourishment is an ineffectual way to combat an imaginary disease. In this case dependable knowledge combined with the strategy of a nurse cast out fear.

RELIGIOUS MISAPPREHENSION

Religious fears are perhaps the most ghastly which

afflict humanity; for, after all, religion is fundamental, and a fear which originates in or is associated with something primary is extremely devastating. Happily, fear as a persuasive to piety has been abandoned by enlightened religious persons. The appeal to fear is, however, sometimes unintentionally made with results that are pathetic and tragic.

A woman, twenty-eight years old, married and the mother of three children and active in the Y. W. C. A., had what she and her friends called a nervous breakdown. She experienced a constant panic of fear. None of the ordinary sources of fear explained her horrible dreads. A skilled counselor discovered the origin of her fear state. When she was a little girl about six years old she attended church on a certain Sunday with her parents. The communion was administered. The minister in his sermon declared that people coming to the Lord's table who were not absolutely honest would perish in hell. The little girl was shocked. She tried to be honest, but such was her code that as the years came and went she could never truthfully assert that she was absolutely honest. For this reason she did not receive the communion and her hellish fear increased until her personality collapsed. Often she left the church before the communion was celebrated, sobbing and fearing that she would be cast into hell. Whenever the communion was mentioned she became silent, shivered, and grew ashen.

The counselor knew that the only way to dispel her fear was to induce her to change her attitude and to receive the communion. She was properly instructed in the teaching of the Bible concerning the nature and value of the communion service. As soon as she understood the benefits

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of the communion and that sincerity and not perfection is required of the communicant, she experienced a measure of release from fear. In her own home a minister of discernment, after several of her friends who were present had borne witness to the consolation and uplift of the sacrament, proposed to administer the communion then and there. She consented to the proposal. He closed the evening with the communion fellowship. The young woman participated and in that solemn hour was set free from her burden of fear. She became a normal person.

After all, fear—except when it has been converted into caution that protects—is the great destroyer of peace of mind, happiness, and efficiency. Let the fearful person face the origin of his agonizing dread and subdue it. If unable to discover the source by his own efforts, let him consult a wise, trustworthy adviser, preferably one who has himself brought to light the roots of a devastating fear and conquered it. Life is too short to be spent panic-stricken, too precious to be wasted by noxious fears, too interesting to be constantly perturbed, and too weighted with useful possibilities to be shattered by torments. Let us savor life with gusto undiminished by fears which make men timid mice.

CHAPTER V

EGOTISM

THE egotistical person lives in and for himself. He is excessively interested in his own ideas, experiences, and welfare. The concerns of others which do not directly affect him are excluded from his attention. He makes himself the center around which he expects all else to revolve; indeed, he wants everything and everybody with whom he has to do to be subservient to himself. He is jealous of those who divert attention from himself or who equal or excel him in ability. He sulks when another who is present in a group is praised or wins approval. He puts his own comfort and advantages before those of others and is actuated by self-interest. He is susceptible to flattery and expects it, and is unduly depressed by neglect or warranted censure.

EGOTISM A FORM OF EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY

The egotist has the characteristics of a spoiled child. In fact, he has not grown up mentally and socially. He probably was pampered as a child and expects the world to bow in abject submission to his every whim, although he may be fifty years old. The very preconditions of maturity, such

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as an understanding of the situations of others, a desire to serve a worthy cause, an active sympathy with the unfortunate, and the encouragement of those who can make significant contributions to mankind, are distressingly absent.

If he is a judge, he will shout at a shrinking prisoner at the bar, knowing that the culprit is too frightened and intimidated to retort in the same vociferous and discourteous outburst. If he is a traffic policeman, he will stage vulgar exhibitions of his authority when he is certain he can do so with impunity and the support of his superior officers. If he is a teacher, he will pose as the fount of all knowledge, will tolerate no dissent from his teachings, and, disdaining to lead his pupils, will drive them into the fields of learning. If he is a family man, he will be as timid as a mouse among those who control his vocational destiny, but tyrannical at home toward his relatively defenseless wife and dependent children. If he is an employer, he wants what he wants when he wants it or he will visit drastic displeasure upon the subordinate to whom he has issued orders.

Parents of either sex, especially mothers, who were pampered when young, will dominate their own children in order to enhance and inflate their own personalities. They will, as it were, devour their own flesh and blood. The welfare of the child is sacrificed to the selfishness of the parent. That the governing purpose is not realized and that ultimately the child is likely to dominate, will be directly shown.

William writes that his mother, a widow, has a successful career in politics, earns her own living, and is a capable woman. She insists that William be at her beck and call.

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Once when he braved her displeasure and attended a gathering of young people she telephoned him that she was ill and implored him to return home without delay. Of course, she was not sick. She urges him to stay at home evenings, lest he be killed in an automobile accident. If she discovers that he has made a social engagement with a young woman, maternal tears are shed until he cancels it. She has subdued him to such an extent that he has no social life with young people. On the other hand, when she visits her friends he is obliged to accompany her. She threatens to commit suicide if he leaves her and seeks his fortune in a distant place. She has no intention of taking her own life. The threat that she will kill herself is made for the purpose of keeping him in subjection to herself. It is a form of intimidation. He is a prisoner; she is the jailer. Malice could not devise a more dreadful way of demoralizing her son. Possessive love is egotistical.

If William does not stage a revolution, defy his mother, and leave her, he will never be self-reliant; and she will not overcome her morbid self-love and domineering spirit. The only thing that can promote normality in both is courageous action on his part. She will dwarf his personality for the sake of gratifying her sordid self and indulge in exhibitions of so-called mother love, so long as he submits to her unreasonable demands. If he rebels and stands on his rights, she herself may take a step toward normality.

THE MAKING OF AN EGOTIST

Most people who are egotistical, as already intimated, have been pampered as children. The process of becoming

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a prig generally begins in the cradle. In fact, the unmitigated selfishness of an adult is a form of perpetual babyhood. In too many homes the infant, speaking in a riddle, is the whole family. The egotist has, as a rule, been smothered as a child by attention, his whim being law which others have obeyed. As a baby he soon learns that he can secure food or anything else he desires by crying long and lustily for it. Early he acquires the technique of staging effective tantrums when he fails to obtain what he wants. The nervous tension of a tantrum which includes anger, vehemence, and fury contributes to his abnormality. As a child indulged to excess by doting parents, he supposes that he is monarch of the world and that nobody is powerful enough to dethrone him. The attempted imposition of the slightest restraint induces a paroxysm of rage.

The process of self-indulgence continues when he is big enough to walk and old enough to understand many remarks of his elders. When his father, deeply concerned, expresses his conviction of what is good or bad for the boy, the mother takes violent issue with her husband. She argues with him, rejects his suggestions, and even treats him with disdain in the presence of the boy. The attitude of his mother is not lost upon the son. He sees in her his protector, the one who shields him from unpleasant experiences and the harsh realities of life, his true friend. The father, who retires from the conflict defeated and humiliated, is degraded in the eyes of the boy. The lad feels exalted and the mother triumphant.

When the boy is ill his mother hovers over him in a state of nervous apprehension, although the doctor has diagnosed the ailment as a minor one, prescribed an effec-

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tive remedy, and given assurance that in a day or two the patient will fully recover. His mother is visibly alarmed and expresses her solicitude in ways which make him believe that he is sicker than he really is, that she knows more about his condition than the doctor, and that the remedies she provides are more effective. She administers not only the medicine the doctor prescribes, but also nostrums she presumes will cure the illness. She takes his temperature frequently and each time shakes her head in anxiety. She disregards the doctor's orders that the patient's diet be plain, and provides the boy with a variety of food sufficient to make a well person ill. She fairly gorges him with dainties hard to digest. Throughout this period, as before and for years to come, she calls him "mother's precious man" and "mother's lamb."

As the child grows into the middle years of boyhood the process of coddling and expanding his sense of self-importance waxes in intensity. The egotistical dominance of the mother increases in proportion, at least for a time. The influence of schoolteachers who do not play into the hands of the mother must be overcome. She takes his part against the admonitions and authority of his teachers. In so far as she is able to do it, the mother fulfills every desire of her darling and thus robs him of the discipline and satisfaction of surmounting difficulties. She does her diabolical best to stifle initiative, originality, and free creativeness, which are numbered among man's most precious abilities.

She denies her son nothing that she can possibly give him. If the family is in moderate circumstances, she goads her husband to greater efforts as a provider in order that

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her boy may have luxuries that people in their station cannot afford to buy. She is ignorant of or willfully disregards the patent fact that only by conquering difficulties and assuming the ordinary risks of living does one develop robust and considerate personality. To be sure, she makes it plain to her son that she has overwhelmed herself with self-sacrifice in order that he may have the best of everything, and that his father, poor wretch, is incompetent and inferior and, therefore, barely to be tolerated. She deliberately creates the impression that when he earns enough to furnish her darling with all, he does no more than his bounden duty and is not entitled to any credit.

When the boy is old enough to comprehend the meaning of heredity, she attributes any undesirable traits he may display to a taint derived from his father or other paternal relatives. Any limitation, mental or physical, is thus accounted for; and the explanation is intended to bind the boy more closely to herself. All the admirable qualities he has are of course inherited from her or implanted by her, and consequently he owes her his constant and undivided devotion. She demands his exclusive love as an inherent right, as a right not to be questioned but actively respected.

Now the trick that this mother's mind is playing on her is that her son, so far from being her devoted lover, will be fickle, inconsistent, discontented, and selfish. Unless he undergoes a radical change in disposition, he will in due time be a tyrant whom she has created in her own image. The harvest which she will reap will in all likelihood be far different from the one she fully expected to gather.

In school he continues to be known as a problem-child. Like most problem-children he is troublesome because his

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mother is a problem-mother. Of course, the school with its daily routine and the authority vested in teachers continues to obstruct the process of making him a self-opinionated, obstinate, and self-indulgent adult. When his teachers refuse to coddle him, and decline to defer to him as to an absolute monarch whose every desire must be granted, he adopts a more refined method to achieve his purposes. He knows that as a boy of ten or twelve he would make himself a laughingstock if he threw himself upon the floor of the schoolroom, and kicked and screamed until he secured what he desired. That technique was effective on the few occasions when, as a small boy at home, his elders had the audacity to deny him what he wanted. He is clever enough to discard such crude practices, now that he is older and more experienced. He assumes the attitude of a wronged and shamefully used person, a martyr who with lip-biting courage bears the inflicted outrages. He tries to give the impression that he is a hero who bares his breast to the ravenous wolves which best him. He endeavors by the attitude and demeanor of a resigned but wronged sufferer to serve notice on his teachers that his mother will promptly be informed of their impudent transgressions and that she will give herself no rest until justice has been meted out to his tormentors.

When his schoolmates decline to comply with his demands, refuse to make him the center about which their play activities revolve and generally withhold preferential treatment, he sulks and pouts. He may be exasperated and enraged. He will refuse to participate in games unless he is given as a vested right the stellar parts. He will withdraw from the presence of his schoolmates and nurse his imagi-

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nary grievances in solitude. His objective is to bend his schoolmates to his will and to be the recipient of their plaudits and praises.

Popularity as such is not to be condemned outright. To win the approval of others through worthy accomplishments is no demerit. To be esteemed for character's sake is no disgrace. In such a case popularity is incidental and subordinate. One does not strive to be popular but does that which is so commendable that one merits the respect, approval, and support of others. Now the egotist demands popularity which is unwarranted and unearned. The boy who imagines that by being moodily silent when he feels that he has been neglected, or surly when he thinks that he has been humiliated, he can achieve popularity with his schoolmates is doomed to disappointment. Boys and girls with wholesome family background have a keen sense of what is socially appropriate. At the same time they are disposed to discipline an upstart, a pretender, a spoilsport by excluding him from their company. Sometimes they resort to direct action against such an offender; they endeavor to pommel sense into his conceited head.

Percival was accompanied to school by his mother every day, and was escorted home by her after school. He had been degraded to an egotistical, conceited, and self-centered boy by a mother who devoured his personality in the name of maternal solicitude for his welfare. He was peeved because his schoolmates did not exalt and worship him. In order to teach them a severe lesson he deprived them of the benefit of his self-seeking company. He held himself aloof in what he considered a dignified reserve, eloquent with reproof. Percival was aided and abetted in

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his campaign of silently rebellious reprimand by his incensed mother. He knew that on the school grounds and in the schoolroom he was under the protection of his teachers, that there his schoolmates could not lay violent hands upon him without paying a severe penalty. The other boys were aware of the immunity which he enjoyed. They bided their time. Their opportunity to pay the score presented itself one afternoon when illness prevented Percival's mother from escorting him home. They tore his clothes and beat him with fists and sticks.

If the drastic penalties which boys inflict upon an egotistical schoolmate when they are given an opportunity to take him down a peg or two were not counteracted, they might have a salutary effect. If they were supported by parents, intimates, and situations which contribute to courtesy, co-operation, and the consideration of the rights of others, they might transform the personality of the young egotist. Alas and alack, the mother is likely to redouble her efforts to minister to his vanity and creature comfort. He takes refuge in her foolish endeavors to make him dependent upon herself, and is avid for the consolation, flattery, and personal attention which she lavishly bestows. Instead of becoming a more thoughtful and independent lad, he plunges into deeper slavery to his mother and at the same time develops his self-love to an advanced stage of intensity.

A MENACE TO DOMESTIC FULFILLMENT

In the course of time the coddled young man may take a wife. To be sure, his mother may place obstacles to marriage in his path; but, swept from his mooring by a surging

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tide of romantic love, he may disregard her displeasure and override her active opposition. He may sense in the young woman who has charmed him another person who, if given the opportunity, will subordinate herself to his preferences. If he marries, he will assume that his wife will be the blind servant of his will. He will lord it over her and any children they may have as time passes. His wife will be expected to take the place which his mother occupied. He will attempt to domineer his wife and to make her subservient to his purposes and desires.

He may not be able to exact a tribute of adulation and deference from his employer, whether he be a mechanic or bookkeeper; but this inability only increases his tyranny in the home. Compelled by economic necessity to curb his egotistical disposition in his vocational situation, he exercises additional despotic power in his domestic relations. If his wife is dependent on him for her bread and lacks the courage to assert her rights, she may become his spineless drudge. He will suppose that it is her privilege to give him all the care and praise which he craves and to expect nothing for herself.

If she rebels, he may return to his mother whom he can at last dominate and who will do his bidding. Frank Dawn was a married mother-bound egotist. His wife, unable to reform him, divorced him. Frank sought to escape from an unappreciative world by returning to his mother's home. His wife died a few months later, and he obtained the custody of the two young daughters. Frank was intelligent enough to perceive that his mother was dominating both him and his children in return for the transparent inflation of his vanity. She regulated the lives

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of the little girls to the minutest detail. He had to account for any time spent outside the home after working hours. He began to invent absurd lies when she questioned him after he returned from visits to his friends, of all of whom she of course disapproved.

At last he resolved to leave the maternal home and to lead a normal, self-reliant life. He rebelled against the impending complete loss of self-direction. He knew that the longer he remained in his mother's home the less freedom of thought and action he would exercise. Furthermore, he was aware that his mother was gaining more and more control over his children and that if he did not separate them from her she would in time entirely usurp his place in their lives and entirely dominate them. He bought a house several miles distant from his mother's home and announced that he and his children were going to occupy it. The news aroused her wrath. Although she writhed with indignation, she exercised strategy. She voiced maternal displeasure and made sarcastic comments, but always halted short of an outburst of temper which might have led to permanent estrangement.

Not long after the removal to the new home, Frank became aware of inner disquiet. The consciousness of the absence of something he at first could not define disturbed him. Had not the children as well as he been delivered from oppression? He reasoned that the period of mental depression would soon end and the joys of the emancipation of himself and his children would, in due season, be tasted to the full. Nevertheless, the feeling of dissatisfaction did not evaporate, but actually increased with the passing days. At last it dawned upon him that he was under

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the control of a force from which he could not escape by a change of residence. His enslavement to his mother maddened him, but he could not live apart from her. Predatory mother-love had pursued and recaptured him. It was stronger than his own disposition to give his children a home where they might develop their aptitudes and tastes and not be controlled by a domineering grandmother. He returned to her home in pliant mood with his tearful but helpless little daughters. In the maternal home Frank was speedily enthroned again as the object of special attention and concessions. His attitude toward his mother was compounded of deference and defiance, of compliance and domination.

EGOTISM NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

I have used the case of the self-centered mother and son in the above description and illustration. Not that in all instances the mother and a son play the uncomplimentary parts in the drama of egotistical behavior. The mother and a daughter, or the father and a son, or another combination, may be the principals in the tragic play. I might have introduced a father and a daughter with slight modifications of details as the chief actors and have expounded the same underlying characteristics of the egotistical personality. Egotism is not the exclusive property of anybody.

It should be clear that adult babyhood expresses itself in various forms of emotional upheaval and in types of behavior which are decidedly unkind and ruthless. In many cases it manifests itself in a conglomeration of elements, some of which are simply odd, and others of which imperil the rights of others. For example, the automobile

owner and driver who is self-centered betrays his egotism in typical childishness. He may endeavor to secure from the state motor vehicle department a license plate with a low number. He presumes that a low license number is an indication to the public that he is a distinguished character and is duly recognized as a personage by the state. He takes delight in sounding the horn; for the blasts are an imperious summons which others, either pedestrians or automobile drivers, should respect. He prefers an automobile horn which is different, or one which can produce several notes, for such a feature makes him distinctive. Above all, he drives down the middle of the highway. He takes possession of the thoroughfare. Since it is dangerous for another automobile driver to pass him either on the right or on the left, he exercises a diabolical power over others and thereby increases his self-importance. Their exasperation only nurtures his self-esteem. He is a still greater menace when he is accompanied by a personable young woman, because he is likely to yield to the temptation to display his vulgar independence and control over others in order to create an impression.

Strangely enough, apologizing is in many cases a symptom of egotism. An abject apology gives one an opportunity to occupy the spotlight. It focuses attention on oneself. Four times out of five, the shortcoming for which an apology is made would have remained unnoticed if it had not been mentioned. It is presumptuous to suppose that a man's small failures are of such importance that he must discuss them and confess them. The gentleman who inadvertently knocks off the hat of another, of course is sorry and expresses his regret, but without thought of

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bestowing distinction upon himself. Profuse apologizing for trifles is a means of securing notice which the egotist is likely to adopt.

CAN IT BE CURED?

Can the egotist be remade? Can he be induced to forsake his inordinate pride, priggery, and conceit? Can the childish adult become normal? It is admitted that egotism, once deeply rooted and established as second nature, is difficult to eradicate. It is a first principle in the improvement of human nature that the individual, especially the adult, must recognize and sincerely confess his defect, honestly deplore the injury which it does to others and himself, and have a constant desire to conquer it.

Prevention is far easier than cure. Ideally the foundations for thoughtful, considerate, useful, and self-controlled adult living are laid in the home during childhood. If the child is surrounded by wholesome formative influences, if proper standards of conduct are inculcated by his parents and teachers, and if moral and mental defects are corrected in their early stages, the probabilities are that he will develop the distinctive characteristics of normality. The good home is the one in which the child is taught self-reliance without encroaching upon the rights of others, is gradually emancipated from dependence on his parents, and is prepared for hearty and effective participation in the affairs of the world. His respect is not demanded but earned by intelligent elders. Affection is balanced by obligation. He is not weakened by excessive attention, nor enslaved by domination, nor embittered by negligence, but is stimulated and directed and encouraged to meet life

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situations with courage, humility, and regard for the rights and welfare of other persons.

Mere instruction, however necessary and sound, seldom produces normality in growing children. Living in an intimate group of which the members are patient, happy, industrious, and unselfish is the most effective known means of influencing the behavior of the child for good. Participation in the life of a wholesome group is the most potent force in the formation of admirable character. We derive our outlook upon life, our habits of thinking, and our ideals of conduct from those with whom we associate, especially from those whom we admire and whose good will and confidence we prize. The appeal to the intellect, apart from action and emotion and particularly from membership in a desirable group, is likely to be a dismal failure.

THE DISCIPLINE OF REVERSES

The egotistical young person is often transformed into a teachable, useful member of society by a change in circumstances over which he has no control. The doting mother may be removed by the hand of death or the indulgent father lose his position. A grim circumstance may thrust the youth out into a world that calmly ignores his presumed superiority, and proceeds to discipline him, teach him good manners, and foster an attitude compounded of humility, dignity, and friendliness. If he is stubborn and resists its stern corrective methods, the world will turn a cold shoulder and let him starve unless he is economically independent.

Arthur was a self-opinionated lad, the darling of his mother, a cynic and a cad. He had been taught by his

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mother to despise his father, a workingman, to shun all boys whose parents were neither rich nor socially prominent. The health of the father gave way, and poverty invaded the home. His mother developed a serious mental ailment and was committed to an institution for the insane.

It was absolutely necessary for Arthur to earn his own living or to become a public charge. His egotistical disposition cost him the loss of the first gainful job he secured. Realizing that his status was critical, he assumed a different attitude when he found another job. In the course of a year he was a changed lad. He associated with boys of the underprivileged classes, curbed his desire for undue personal attention, took honest pride in earning his bread by doing good work, and began to appreciate the sacrifices his father had made for him.

To be sure, in such a case the individual has latent possibilities which the forces of a changed situation develop. In addition, youth is more plastic and flexible than adulthood. The longer an abnormality has been nurtured, the more difficult it is to dislodge it. If egotism has held undisputed sway for years and no formidable obstacles to its continuance have arisen and the individual derives satisfaction from his selfishness, no incentive to change for the better is felt.

Is it impossible to redeem the adult egotist from his folly? It is not impossible, but it is difficult. Deliverance in part depends on conditions which inhere in the egotist himself. It is evident that if there is no consistent and earnest desire to outgrow adult babyhood no improvement can be made. The egotist must raise and truthfully answer the following questions: What is the nature of my defect?

Why have I permitted it to exist? How did it originate? Do I really want to be a normal person, or is my desire to improve merely temporary? What changes in my attitude and behavior should I make? Am I willing to pay the price which the development of normality exacts?

So long as a person succeeds in having his own way, so long as others are pliant and subservient, so long as he enjoys the sense of power over others even at the cost of their welfare, he is not likely to be moved to reconstruct his personality. If adult babyhood has been deeply entrenched and been uninterrupted for years, voluntary abandonment of it is improbable. On the other hand, if those who are victimized by the egotist revolt against him and resolutely resist his attempts to recover the dominion he has exercised but lost, he may gain insight into his own defects and acquire a desire for the characteristics of a wholesome human being, and recondition his personality. The danger is that when he is opposed he will create such a disturbance that he will frighten them into fresh bondage.

In some cases, if the victim of the domineering parent frees himself and lets the tyrant shift for himself, he will not only save himself but also may startle the adult egotist out of his excessive self-will and conceit. John is a sensitive lad, a poet and thinker, an artist by nature; but his father is determined that he shall become a traveling salesman. Unless John is plucky and sensible enough to refuse to comply with the demands of his egotistical father he will blast his own life, and confirm and strengthen the childishness of his unreasonable parent. After all, children are not the property of their parents, beings to be exploited at will or to be forced into patterns of thought and action which

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are foreign to their dispositions, inclinations, and ideals. A declaration of independence supported by firm and even drastic measures may deliver the enslaved John and at the same time bring the infantile father to his senses.

If the egotist realizes that his domineering personality has alienated his friends, made enemies, and repressed the gifts and personalities of the members of his family and incited one or more of them to rebellion, he may be plunged into despair and feel that he is doomed to collapse. To his own surprise the termination of his domination may not completely disorganize him. He may catch a glimpse of the person he could and ought to be. A gleam of light may pierce the darkness which envelops him. If the false gods he has been worshiping are renounced, he may be upborne by inward supports the existence of which he has not suspected. Instead of ceasing to function as a human being, instead of losing his sanity, instead of losing all hope, he may experience such a measure of relief that he wonders why he did not reconstruct his life long before. If envy, jealousy, vindictiveness, self-centeredness, and other childish traits are eradicated, and the functions of normality such as self-confidence balanced by teachableness, serenity, good will, and dedication to a worthy cause are enthroned, he has experienced the process of regeneration. He has been born again.

CHAPTER VI

DEFLATION

HELEN NORTHFIELD is an attractive young woman. Men like her, and women are fond of her. She is distinguished in appearance, always neatly dressed, friendly and tactful in her personal relationships, and a lover of the beautiful in all its forms. Her family background is rated as good by her friends. Her parents are highly respected in the community in which they live. Helen is a college graduate. Her parents are in straitened financial circumstances, and Helen is therefore compelled to earn her own living. Despite the advantages which she possesses, she is unhappy and moody, all but helpless in the face of crises, dependent on her friends for moral support, irresolute and timid, hardly able to earn enough money to support herself, and is irritated by the kind of work she can find and do to keep body and soul together. What ails this cultured, refined, winsome, but ineffective person? Her personality is deflated.

THE SPINELESSNESS AND THE IMPULSIVENESS OF THE DEFLATED

She belongs to the large and tragic company of those

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who frequently declare, "I'm a failure. I have never undertaken anything with success." People who are deflated are afraid of their own shadows, are childish regardless of age, and are emotionally depressed. When they do accomplish anything significant they are surprised and refrain from giving themselves due credit for the attainment. They are disposed to think that what has been achieved by them is overestimated or is more or less accidental. As a rule, the gifts they have are inhibited by the sense of self-disparagement which is constantly present with them. They stagger through the dismal succession of days under a weight of real or fancied inferiority. They are poor-spirited, and consider themselves worms in the dust that the successful raise.

The person whose self-assurance and self-confidence have crumbled is exceedingly moody. The same individual may feverishly cling to the old, and grasp the new by turns, alternately live in a fairyland and resolve to do great things in the world of reality. Impulsiveness is an outstanding characteristic of the deflated person; sudden changes without valid reasons are made. He does not appreciate either his gifts or his limitations; he refuses to surmount his defects or to assume his proper responsibilities. He is a bundle of inconsistencies and contrasts.

Unpleasant situations are avoided, rather than bravely faced; but if withdrawal from them is impossible, he is likely to engage in aggressive action which is futile. His judgment is untrustworthy, and his prejudices and emotions rule him. Excuses more or less plausible are clothed in the guise of reasons for doing tomorrow, which never arrives, what duty and obligation and common sense urge be done today. He dallies, procrastinates, and daydreams; and at

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the same time he is haunted by fears which are either general and seemingly without cause, or specific and attached to specific circumstances.

AVOIDANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The deflated have no firm grip on life. They spend more time evading responsibilities and inventing pretenses for their feeble and misdirected efforts than it takes persons of the same degree of intelligence, but with self-assurance and well-directed energy, to register substantial achievement.

When confronted with an emergency to the level of which her abilities if released would easily rise, Helen, having exhausted her vast store of other excuses, will blandly remark with a hopeless gesture of the hand, "I'm after all just a child. I have never grown up. I'm emotionally undeveloped and unstable. I'll never amount to anything. It's just my nature, I suppose, not to be able to do what ought to be done." She explores herself and makes her findings not the basis for the drastic reconstruction of her personality but the final pretext for continuing the deflation of herself. She is engaged in an apparently unending quest for people who will assume responsibility for making decisions for her, advance her money which will not be repaid, and coddle her generally. She does not want to take care of another, but to be taken care of by those who will not shatter her complacency.

Often the deflated person evades the obligations which life imposes and which the normal take for granted and assume, by engaging in a series of postponements which

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indefinitely delay the completion of a task. Dread lest the finished product or work be adversely criticized plays a part in the retardation or suspension of serious effort. Helen begins the making of a gown which she needs with feminine enthusiasm for a new garment, but as a rule contrives a dozen excuses for not completing the task. She may allege that she is too busy with other and more important projects, or that styles have changed since she began, or that she does not want to excite the envy of a friend who is unable to make or buy a new dress. By resorting to this form of strategy she would escape unfavorable appraisal of her work and at the same time the skilled effort required to make a dress. She promotes the deflation of her personality under the guise of unavoidable circumstances or noble motive. She poetizes, temporizes, and compromises all for the purpose of shirking the demands of life. Despite the fact that she procrastinates and wastes precious time, Helen likes beautiful clothes, good food, and congenial surroundings.

WORDS INSTEAD OF DEEDS

A method frequently adopted to protect the deflation is the substitution of talk for action. The victim of a sense of insecurity and uncertainty may go from person to person occupying hours in declaiming the reasons why he is unable to do this or that. He may explain that if he had a thousand dollars, or were engaged to be married to a woman of charm, character, and intelligence, he would do what is so obviously his bounden duty. A student may wander from room to room in a dormitory and waste more time telling others how much work he has to do than it would

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take to accomplish the assignments made by the teachers. Such a one may lament that he "owes" Professor Edwards a term paper, and never understands that he, as a student, owes it to himself. He squanders the valuable time of others who are too polite to suggest that he close the door from the outside, because he does not hesitate to pursue any course that preserves his self-estimation and permits him to lead a life of ease and indolence.

The deflated personality may strive to gain recognition by spinning and disseminating absurd theories. Frank Blisswater's rich wife supports him in luxury. He feels inferior in social status to her. In a desperate attempt to win the approval of others he has formulated and is actively promulgating a monetary system the adoption of which he claims would end unemployment, prevent business depressions, and make all citizens prosperous. The economic salvation of the country would be accomplished by making steel, manufactured competitively, the basis of our money-structure. To be sure, when pressed for the details of his scheme, Mr. Blisswater becomes confused and incoherent. Whenever he can secure the floor in a public meeting he will deliver an oration which with rhetorical bombast and pessimistic delusions supposedly sets forth his monetary theory. Of course authorities with whom he has corresponded or argued have repeatedly pointed out the fallacies of his grandiose doctrine, but he regards all such as benighted conservatives whose opposition to social progress must be stoutly resisted.

As a business man he has been a failure. His son is a successful industrialist; his wife is wealthy. His wife is kind to him and understanding, but she also pays the household

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bills. Mr. Blisswater wants to acquire distinction by being a radical in politics. If his distorted views were actually accepted, he would probably abandon them, and vigorously promote a new program. In order to keep his deflated personality from collapsing entirely, he seeks to identify himself in the eyes of the public with schemes which are in reality preposterous notions. This is the chosen method of setting himself apart from others and bidding for approval. He lives and moves in a world of impossibilities, which gives him a sense of importance and a mission.

Many a deflated individual when held to accountability for lack of achievement or for character defects resorts to posing, posturing, boasting, blustering, and indignation. The truth is resented as an insult. A suggestion that it is unfair to let others bear the burden of his temporal support is met with the emotional explosion of an outraged and affronted person. Anger is, of course, a defense; but the one who gives way to it is probably unaware of the nature of this revealing exhibition. It is boldly asserted that the expectations of others are unreasonable, if not actually preposterous, and that it is a sacred duty to oppose them. The self-discredited individual may assume the attitude of one who, if he only thought it worth while, would be able to outdo in brilliant accomplishments the mediocre or inferior attainments of his severe critics. One substitutes attitudinizing and pretense for intelligent action.

TANTRUMS AND EXCUSES

Deflated people, upon whom life's legitimate obligations are pressing, seek refuge in other emotional upheavals. Tantrums, tears, and threats of revenge are staged. Denied

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a new hat by her father, whose purse is slim, Helen may pout, lock herself in her room, play the part of an injured, disgraced, and persecuted child, and at last assume the role of a person resigned to an unjust but inexorable fate. She may wish herself dead. She may derive morbid satisfaction picturing herself a beautiful but pathetic-looking body prepared for burial, surrounded by parents and friends who, alas too late, bewail her untimely death and repent of their heartless and harsh treatment of her. She may contemplate revenge; but if she seriously deliberates for a moment, she knows that she has neither the courage nor the sustained determination to execute the plot. Meanwhile she is hoping, yes expecting, that her father will be sorry that he has refused her request and will with profuse apologies for having hurt her feelings provide her with the coveted new hat. In fact, she already in imagination sees herself the object of the envious admiration of other young women before whom she parades in her modish and becoming hat. She already sees the approving glances and hears the compliments of the gallant young men of the town. It is a pity that so many parents surrender to such tactics.

Multitudes of the deflated blame almost anybody or anything except themselves for their unhappiness, thwartings, and failures. They may hold their parents responsible and not without a semblance of justification, as will be presently indicated. The point which is now being made is that the obdurate and stubborn self-discredited person steadfastly refuses to admit that in the final analysis, whatever the contributing circumstances may have been, he himself is accountable. Such a one may ascribe his spinelessness to external conditions for the influence of which he is

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not responsible. He may declare that his father never taught him how to manage his life, that his schoolteachers did not understand his sensitive nature and give it proper consideration, that the people with whom he was forced to associate were more clever and prosperous than he, and that as a result he did not receive the early training and have the experience which enable one to comply with the demands of adulthood.

Instead of examining himself honestly and accepting the facts disclosed and then adopting a course leading to effective living he prefers to protect his feeling of inadequacy by making others or fate or the spirit of the age answerable. To admit that the springs of his depressed attitude are personal and that he has been deliberately feeding them would be the first step toward emancipation, unless, like Helen, he makes the acknowledgment simply in an effort to forestall criticism and avoid self-improvement.

INSTABILITY AND RESTIVENESS

Often a change of scene, or occupation, or residence is made by the deflated who avows that he wishes to conquer his sense of insufficiency. A change of occupation may be essential to the exercise of the gifts the individual has, for he may be a square peg in a round hole. On the other hand, the deflated exhibit a tendency to flit from one job to another, in order to escape sustained responsibility and to experience variety and excitement. A young woman who holds a diploma from a normal college may secure a position as a schoolteacher; but soon the routine of teaching palls, the maintaining of discipline vexes her, the responsibility of educating children becomes an intolerable burden. She

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will concoct a plausible reason for resigning and turn to her kind but misled friends for moral support, for help in finding another position, and even for financial aid.

A young woman who feels defeated and dissatisfied as an employee, or whose parents refuse to comply with her desires, may seek refuge in marriage. She may fancy that a husband will shield her from life's hardships, make it possible for her to enjoy luxury and ease, and assume the responsibility for her support and welfare. In her eagerness she may marry an inferior man or one who after the honeymoon, to her consternation, calmly but firmly expects her to contribute her full share to the making of a home. The outlook for a successful marriage in either case, although not entirely hopeless, is dubious.

A young man who has resigned himself to failure may wander from place to place, undertaking a succession of different jobs, only to conclude that he is master of no occupation and that he might find distraction elsewhere. Of course, if he is coddled where he lives and is relieved of the task of making important decisions and earning his bread, the mere thought of leaving the haven of security is staggering and fearsome. If the home situation is uncongenial and going from place to place disappointing, he may seek a wife who will shelter him. He may be able to find a wife who has private income or who is willing to work for a salary sufficient to support both and to relieve him of the necessity of earning his daily bread. She may be willing to relieve him of the burden of making decisions.

TYPICAL ORIGINS OF DEFLATION AMONG CHILDREN

The origins of deflated personalities are legion. A

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reference to a few typical sources may aid the affected person to understand himself, and to guide him in the conquest of his attitude of defeatism. To begin with, everybody has handicaps. Nobody is entirely free from limitations. We are imperfect in knowledge; our abilities are restricted; obstacles block our paths to desirable goals. It is the attitude which we take toward life which determines whether we shall be victors or victims.

The young child soon learns that his older sisters and brothers, as well as his parents, are bigger, stronger, and more capable than he is. Bodily malformations such as blindness, deafness, dental irregularities, smallness of stature, lameness, ugliness of face and figure may arouse a sense of insufficiency.

The malformed child, especially the one with visible physical defects, compares himself with other children and realizes that he is not only different from others, but also handicapped. If his parents pity him and unduly shield him from the stern realities of life, his personality becomes deflated, and self-pity dominates him. If they teach him to make the best of the limitations which cannot be removed and to excel in what he can do, he will develop self-respect, confidence, and certainty. The deformed child is unable to participate in all the activities in which the normal children engage, but he should be taught to develop the gifts he has and to make the best possible use of his endowments.

Emotions which weaken personality breed insecurity and defeat. A neglected child or one controlled by fear is likely to become dependent and a prey to despair. In fact, a too sheltered childhood, a childhood which is too

carefree, often leads to the deflation of personality when the cares and duties of adulthood make their demands. This is exactly what has made Helen Northfield irresolute and dependent. Although her parents are estimable persons, they did, however, treat Helen as a child with excessive tenderness. She was a pampered favorite. She was therefore helpless when as a young woman she was confronted by the ordinary responsibilities of one who is compelled by circumstances to earn a living. When the child is guarded from the harshness of his surroundings by well-meaning but short-sighted parents, he does not unfold his capacity for initiative and independence. He is doomed to defeat when protection is withdrawn by later conditions and experiences. The child who, on the contrary, is forced to conform to parental desires may meekly submit or resort to deceit; but in either case self-respect and self-reliance are destroyed.

If a child is sensitive and repressed, if his strong points and solid achievements are ignored, if he loses faith in the fairness of parents and teachers, it is easy for him to be jealous of those who excel him and to hate those who withhold recognition and encouragement. Vindictiveness and vengeance are barriers to companionship and friendship, and isolate him. Loneliness and frustration are the bitter fruits of his attitudes toward those whose regard he craves but has not won. The emotional life of the deflated is unstable, divisive, and hampering.

When the school child does not meet the intellectual expectations of his parents, he is discredited in their sight and in his own. Just why it is a disgrace for a child not to be an honor pupil in every branch of his school work has

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not yet been satisfactorily explained. The melancholy fact persists that parents are irritated and feel that their own status in the community has been dwarfed and their personal ambitions thwarted when the report cards which their children bring home from school show that their offspring are less intellectually advanced than anticipated. The children are goaded into attempts which are beyond their abilities, and as a result they are discouraged and do not do as good school work as they might if they were not nagged by their parents. In many cases the poor quality of the pupil's work is not due to his lack of ability but to the indifference or incompetence of his teacher. It is the teacher rather than the pupil who should be held to accountability for the low level of achievement of the latter, for the sense of failure which overwhelms him and makes him lose confidence in himself.

Too frequently invidious comparisons of the less liberally mentally endowed with the more capable brothers and sisters are made by parents whose pride and unwarranted ambitions have suffered. The child so contrasted and at least by implication rebuked loses heart, is embittered, and often harbors hatred against his parental tormentors and those whose attainments he cannot match. The youngest child is in many homes overshadowed and outdone by his older brothers and sisters, and, unless he is safeguarded, will be oppressed by a sense of insignificance. Unless the child is taught that if he is a faithful steward of the gifts he has, however few and mediocre they may be, he has no reason to hang his head in shame, he will go through life defeated and thwarted.

The child who is aware that his brothers or sisters are

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given preferential treatment by his parents, grows up smarting under resentment and may do strange things to acquire the approval of his elders. Alice is an only daughter fifteen years old and has three brothers, two of them older and one younger than herself. Her father and mother have placed their three sons upon a pedestal and look upon her as an inferior person because she is a girl. She is alert, intellectual, gifted, and creates a pleasing impression upon all but the other members of the family. She is jealous of her brothers and wishes she were a son.

In the privacy of her room she dons boy's clothing, and in the presence of others she displays to a perceptible degree the characteristics and mannerisms which mark her brothers. She is no doubt seeking to win the recognition accorded her brothers by assuming what she supposes are masculine traits. If she marries a man who is a normal male, he will be filled with consternation and dismay and probably with revulsion if he ever discovers her in men's garments. Alice might be content to be altogether charmingly feminine if her parents gave her the status which is her due. The adoption of a perceivable masculine role is incited by parents who are guilty of a grave breach of obligation and devoid of an adequate appreciation of her normal expectations. They are jeopardizing her future, although she is old enough to share with them the blame.

ADULT FAILURE AND DEFEATISM

Among the other direct and contributing origins of the spirit of defeatism is vocational failure. The person who is miscast occupationally, who should be a farmer instead of a factory worker, is unhappy, bored, and generally dispir-

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ited. If the family or other responsibilities make it difficult for him to find himself in the world's work, he feels that his neck is burdened with a millstone while his nose is pressed against a grindstone. He may seek satisfaction in reading agricultural publications and in cultivating a small garden; but such supplementary activities, although they afford considerable relief from nervous tension, do not change the actual occupational situation. The recreational diversions may make his lot more tolerable and dissipate nervous interference, but they do not extricate him from his vocational predicament. He may be doomed by circumstances beyond his control to lead a depressed occupational existence.

Moral lapses, evil habits, and questionable practices induce a sense of guilt, inferiority, and defeat. When conscience and behavior clash, the evildoer is emotionally upset, cannot maintain poise, and lacks the courage which springs from a clean heart and an upright purpose. Of course, if a wall is erected between ideals and conduct so that the two are kept apart, no feeling of condemnation arises. It is possible to uphold a high moral standard for others and to become righteously indignant when they violate it, but at the same time not to apply it to the conduct of one's own life. If one's moral precepts are modified or explained away so that they no longer hold sway, reprehensible deeds do not rob one of self-esteem. The average man, however, does have moral sensibilities which are outraged when behavior runs counter to them. A perturbed conscience is one of the most prolific sources of a deflated self.

The person who is mismated may on that account feel that life is too harsh, that he has been vanquished, that he

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is unequal to the demands made upon him, that he is incompetent, that he is inferior to others, that he is the victim of circumstances he cannot surmount. He may be denied the affection, recognition, encouragement, co-operation, and companionship which he assumed matrimony would entail. He may be persuaded that marriage has defrauded, mocked, and derided him.

The wife may be more talented and energetic than her husband and in due time hold him in contempt. An average man may in such circumstances become desperate and irritable and less capable than he was before he entered the state of wedlock. Larry's wife was a beautiful, capable, and attractive young woman. Not long after his wedding day Larry was alternately talkative and sullenly silent. At times he was despondent. Larry was not the strong, care-free, and efficient husband his wife had supposed he would be. He lost his job through no fault of his and was unable to find another; hence, his wife secured employment as secretary to a business man. In the course of time he was employed at a small wage and she continued to work in secretarial capacity in order to supplement his meager earnings. She gave him to understand that he was a failure and that at least a legal separation would be the outcome of her lack of respect for him. The fear of divorce, the lack of security in the home, the loss of the affection of the woman he loved, hatred for her relatives whom he unreasonably blamed for the domestic rift, and jealousy of every man to whom she spoke robbed him of peace of mind, made him moody and tactless, and rendered him morosely hopeless. The helpless and unhappy frame of mind which she created in him made it all the more difficult for Larry

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to secure employment and to support his wife. At first he diluted painful marital upheavals with romantic fiction, fancied that soon he would secure a lucrative position, provide her with the luxuries she craved, relieve her of the necessity of working for a salary in the business world, and as a result win her approval and re-establish himself in her affections; but soon he became resentfully deflated and in a state of desperate anxiety awaited the next step his wife would take. Finally, in deep dejection he left her at her relentless command.

Is it possible to restore to normality the defeated personality? It is admittedly difficult to reconstruct the individual who has for years leaned upon others and been a log drifting with the stream. As a rule, nothing short of heroic measures adopted by a person who has insight, courage, and resources are effective. In some cases the battle against a sense of helplessness in the face of odds must be successfully fought repeatedly if the personality is to develop self-confidence, maintain self-respect, and accomplish deeds to the full measure of abilities.

CANDID SELF APPRAISAL THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

What can a man victimized by deflation of personality do to remedy this deplorable state of mind? It takes courage and honesty to overcome the emotional depression which he has permitted to develop and to rule him. First of all, it is helpful for him to analyze himself, his personal history, his early training, his attitude toward life and its vexations, and his present situation. Then he may ask himself questions like the following and truthfully answer them: Does it make me miserable to be different from other

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people? Does deserved adverse criticism just depress me or move me to mend my ways? Do I lack self-confidence? Does flattery gratify me more than substantial accomplishment? Am I unable to make a decision until the time for action has passed? Do I cross the street to avoid meeting certain people? Do others ever come to me for advice? Do I say things for the purpose of hurting the feelings of other people? Do I belong to a group and participate in its activities? Am I discouraged when others express and defend opinions which differ from my own? What do I do when I spend an evening alone? Do I prefer to take a journey alone or in a company? Do I seek the advice of intelligent people and when I have obtained it disregard it? Do I borrow money with the intention of returning it soon but actually invent excuses for indefinitely postponing repayment? Do I prefer to associate with people who are considerably younger than I am?

A man who has the courage to examine himself, to sit in judgment upon his own thoughts, feelings, and actions, states that more than once he has spoken in a political meeting, not because he has had anything of value to impart, but in order to attract attention to himself. He has learned and taken to heart the fact that a superior air and cocksureness may be evidences of a lack of self-confidence. He knows that the individual who blusters is not upborne by superiority but is disguising a consciousness of inferiority. He is aware of the tendency of persons to excuse or conceal their shortcomings and uncertainties. He records that he was reared on a farm and was an adult when he entered a higher institution of learning as a student. He attended classes with students most of whom were ten years

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younger than himself. He understands himself well enough to realize that he felt at a disadvantage because of his age. He is small of stature. He knows that the man who is short and slight is likely to feel insignificant. For years he has had to battle against a devaluation of himself and an active disposition to take refuge in pretense. When he is financially unable to provide his family with all the comforts to which he feels them entitled he must slay the dragon of a depressing sense of failure. Be it said to his credit that he does face the dragon and deal him deathblows. Through rigorous self-discipline he is becoming a self-reliant and socially useful person.

To discover the roots of the sense of frustration is not to extract them and to be converted into a self-confident, competent, and triumphant personality. Self-exploration is only preliminary to the long process of the reconstruction of self, a process which, if undertaken intelligently and bravely, will be interrupted by periodic lapses and discouragements, but which will ultimately be rewarded with success.

DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE THROUGH ACCOMPLISHMENT

In the second place, the man oppressed by a sense of futility and uselessness may take stock of himself and frankly recognize the ability actually possessed. Certainly he is able to do something well, excels in some particular. He need not let the demon of despair persuade him that he has no gifts at all. Disdaining to be a parasite and refusing to eat the bread of idleness, he can engage in a useful occupation. If not over fifty, he need not hesitate to make a vocational change if it has been conclusively

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demonstrated that he is a misfit in his present occupation. If older, he can make the best of his vocational situation and not let it unduly depress him. He can engage in non-vocational activities which are congenial and release nervous tension, and exercise the ability he has, no matter how lowly and commonplace it may seem to be.

Can the deflated woman cook or sew or grow flowers or nurse the sick? Does she like pets? Is she fond of birds and animals? Can the deflated man play checkers or golf or tennis? Can he swim? Can he drive an automobile or make articles with a carpenter's tools? Assuredly anyone can do or learn to do something in which to take pride. One can lend a hand to a needy shy boy or girl. The devil of pessimism need never prevent a man from doing what he is capable of; let him do what he can and do it with all his might and take an honest pride in achievement. When glowing courage has been aroused by the exercise of his powers, he will proceed to conquer or absorb other obstacles to happiness and success, let the effort cost what it will. Each conquest will help win another victory. Of course I am not advocating the substitution of the minor for the major performances of which one is capable, but the beginning of the construction of a dependable and stable personality.

Visible bodily defects that yield to modern science can be removed; many physical blemishes can be surgically eliminated. The rest can be borne with fortitude. A homely face is not the worst liability of a woman. In fact, a genuinely amiable, gracious, and kind woman is good-looking to those who know her regardless of the outline of the face or the figure. Approved conduct, worthy deeds,

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and good work of some kind should engage the powers of the physically handicapped. The bodily deformed can excel in activities which do not require a normal physique. A lame girl may, through diligent practice, become skilled in the use of the needle; a boy with a club foot may excel as a swimmer; a blind youth may become a successful lawyer. Recognition and popularity are the legitimate by-products.

Now and then a fortunate and favorable social relationship helps one to overcome a disconcerting state of inadequacy. Elmer Williams was a timid young man, homely, short, fat, and a failure in the world's work. When his case seemed utterly hopeless, a young woman of character, charm, and ability took a personal interest in him. She was maternal. She saw in Elmer somebody whom she could mother. He was flattered by her attentions, which he supposed were prompted by sterling qualities he did not hitherto realize he possessed. It was with pride that he presented her to his friends. She, in turn, became romantically attached to him because under her influence he asserted his manhood, developed his gifts, and succeeded in his work. She gave him the incentive and inspiration he needed to combat his inferiority and deficiency. Each case of deflation is peculiar to itself and requires specialized treatment.

A defeated man grimly determined to become independent, aggressive, and self-confident entered a restaurant at the luncheon hour. He occupied a table which supported the legend "Reserved" and firmly disregarded the protests of the headwaiter. He examined the menu, in a loud voice announced, "There is nothing here I can possibly eat," arose, and took his indignant departure. Several days later he appeared, and ordered a dinner which he seemed to

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relish. In response to the surprise of the headwaiter the diner apologized for his previous conduct and explained that he had made a scene in order to build up self-reliance. He concluded with the observation that of late he felt more sure of himself. Although one can hardly recommend that a deflated person go and do likewise, the underlying principle is sound and should be applied. To face the world without shattering fear, to take one's part without rancor, but with assurance, to develop latent powers, and to know that God helps him who helps himself is to engage in the successful conquest of defeatism.

CHAPTER VII

DELUSION

A HOST of us are misled by one or more devices created by our own minds. In the majority of instances we are unaware of the subtle means which the human mind adopts to disguise or ignore limitations of all sorts. We desire the approval of ourselves and others; but, unfortunately, far too often we try to maintain a reputation we do not deserve. We hide behind barricades which we have erected.

We shall not describe the delusions of persecution or grandeur which are entertained by certain patients confined in institutions for the mentally disordered. We shall not discuss the plight of the man who is fully persuaded that he is Abraham Lincoln or that of the woman who is convinced that she is being harassed and injured by implacable enemies. We shall examine representative forms of self-deception which persons who are not hospitalized harbor without danger of mental collapse. Our primary interest centers in those types of ordinary self-deception which the individual aided or unaided by another can discover and correct.

There are at least a dozen other ways in which we

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mortals disguise our real motives and engage in activities which deceive others and in many cases ourselves. We all act from mixed motives. Often we are impelled to action by a constellation of more or less incompatible incentives. Ordinarily we are spurred by a combination of desires which are different but not necessarily in conflict with one another. A man who had been jilted went to Africa for the publicly announced purpose of achieving a life-long ambition—the shooting of a rhinoceros—but also for the unadmitted purpose of forgetting the woman. A teacher may allegedly serve the cause of education and at the same time earn bread for himself and family, and acquire desired status in the community. One may acknowledge the presence and influence of one actuating element, but deny the existence of other incentives equally if not more powerful. The motive we openly avow is generally the one we believe to be creditable, the one which enhances our standing in the eyes of others, and increases our own self-esteem. It is human to conceal a dominant but uncomplimentary motive and to profess a real or imaginary incitement which flatters us.

PLAUSIBLE REASONING

When a conflict arises between what we know we should do and what we want to do, we often consciously or unconsciously resort to self-deception. We persuade ourselves that what we prefer to do is what in all conscience we are obliged to do. We give reasons for the course of action chosen against the dictates of our better selves, which are perhaps good but are not the ones which actually move us. We engage in self-defense. We seek refuge from a sense of

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guilt in compromise, self-deception, dishonesty, superficial argumentation, and hypocrisy. A person may with tears in the eyes and a pious conviction of rectitude declare it to be his bounden duty to act in a manner which contradicts his own good taste, the expectations of society, and the accepted precepts of morality. A desire to do as he pleases, without loss of self-esteem and the approval of others, is present with such a deluded offender.

Esther Johnson is a member of the wing of a church which believes in confession to and absolution by the pastor. She affirmed that she did not observe these practices, holding that they were not essential to true religion. A careful analysis of her personality disclosed that she did not go to confession because she was leading a life for which the pastor would have condemned her but which she wished to continue. She may have been sincere in her attitude toward the confessional.

A boy about to ring the bell of the studio of his violin teacher may at the same time see and hear the fire trucks drive down the street, and quickly think of several reasons why it is his duty, without serving notice, not to take the music lesson and rush with all possible speed to the scene of the conflagration. The reasons he thinks of for breaking an educational appointment and going to a fire where he can be of no help, may be plausible to him; but they are specious, mere excuses for neglecting his musical training and enjoying the excitement which the turmoil of a fire affords. He does not take into account that he is unfair to his teacher and sacrificing something more important than seeing a building in flames. On his way to the scene of the fire he may in imagination picture himself a hero

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climbing long and steep ladders and rescuing persons in peril from the flames. He may persuade himself that it is his duty to omit the music lesson in order to succor somebody overcome by the fumes and smoke in an upper room. It may not occur to him that he would not be allowed to play the part of rescuer, that if he were given the opportunity to attempt heroic deeds he would fail, that he would be a nuisance and a hindrance to the firemen. He may defend his flight from duty and refuse to admit that he let love of excitement and a disinclination to work determine his attitude and action.

The concocting of perfectly believable reasons for one's faults and failures is a common practice. Sometimes the deeds for which alleged reasons are given are not particularly harmful, but the habit of self-defense by making excuses is debilitating. To say the least, the practice fosters dishonesty, even when the procedure itself is merely ridiculous. It becomes a menace to mental health, good morals, efficiency, and usefulness to the community when it is an attempt to escape from personal responsibility. Everybody deludes himself to a certain extent, but many deceive themselves a great deal and to the extreme detriment of themselves. It is essentially a childish performance. A motor car manufacturer advertised his product thus, "Pack up your troubles and ride, ride, ride." This is, figuratively speaking, precisely what the person who tries to flee from himself and a problem attempts to do when he resorts to false reasoning.

Two children at play developed a quarrel. In the course of the angry dispute the one child viciously kicked the other in the face. When the offender was called to

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account by her concerned father she explained that when she extended her leg, the other child ran into the foot. The explanation was made so seriously that it seemed as if the child believed it herself. In fact if she had been more nimble witted, she might have insisted that having her foot struck with the face of another person was an affront to her personality, a violation of her rights, an insult not to be condoned.

Many resort to self-deception in order to save face, to keep from losing caste in their own eyes as well as in those of other people. They suppose that to admit the existence of a personal defect is a humiliating experience which is to be avoided at any cost. This trick which the mind plays on them assumes a variety of specific manifestations. For example, now and then an individual will go so far as to maintain that vocational failure has been brought about, not by incompetence, but by a moral lapse. A discharge for occupational inadequacy may be remote from one's moral ideals and practices. One's job is necessary to a livelihood and to concede lack of ability is regarded as more serious than a profession of moral guilt. The deluded person may attribute his vocational predicament to a moral offense of which he is innocent. It is possible to hold many jobs without being morally above reproach; hence the inclination to delude oneself with irrelevant interpretations.

A man was discharged because he was unequal to the demands of his position. The employer took drastic action only after prolonged attempts to improve the ability of the employee had failed. The dismissed man at first accused the employer of injustice and became bitter and hostile in his attitude toward him. Later he told his friends who were

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helping him find another position that he had been discharged because he had grown morally lax. He declared that the Lord had chastened him for his misdeeds by moving his employer to discharge him. A conference of his friends with the former employer disclosed that he had the highest regard for the discharged man's character and that dismissal was necessitated by lack of the required skill. Nobody could convince the deluded man that he did not have the ability which his former position demanded. There was no connection between the specified moral transgression and his occupational deficiency. Even after he had secured another position, one in which he functioned effectively, he clung tenaciously to his error. How much more sensible it would have been to have taken an inventory of his abilities and to have recognized freely that he was a round peg in a square hole! Occupational pride was greater than moral self-respect.

Excuses may be substituted for effort, work, and accomplishment. A man may be sincere in his statements that he is the victim of circumstances beyond his control, that he is always being attacked and defeated despite his heroic efforts to succeed. He may create a painful defensive attitude. He may at first be more or less aware of inexcusable self-defense; but in time he may develop a self-righteous state of mounting indignation against others, fate, or whatever he may blame for his condition.

An elderly man who was being supported by gifts of generous relatives earnestly maintained that he was eager to find gainful work. He declared that it was his desire to be self-sustaining. It is significant that every job which he might have had was unsuitable. He gave reasons for

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refusing job after job. For example, he was offered the job of caring for a few hundred newly hatched chicks. The work involved was not hard or difficult but it did entail attention to details and long hours. He gave consideration to the offer and after due deliberation announced with profound regret that he could not accept it. He stated that under his care and despite all efforts he could put forth some of the chicks would die. He regretted that he was not well enough to shoulder the responsibility for the care of the chicks and to endure the regret which would be his when any of them died. The man may have been sincere in his rejection of jobs, for his mind had learned to play tricks on him.

TRANSCERENCE OF EMOTION FROM ITS INSTIGATOR

One may disguise an unworthy desire or resentment by giving the concrete expression of it an interpretation which inflates the ego and fills the breast with righteous indignation or a sense of duty well done. One makes others the objects of wrath or joy although they have not originated such mental states. A business man may lose a good customer. Irritated because his commercial rival has lured from him a profitable customer and depressed by the financial loss which is entailed, he returns home in the evening. His young son at play in the home is no more than usually noisy but his gloomy father admonishes him to be quiet. In a few moments the boy forgets the paternal orders and resumes his boisterous play. The father forthwith punishes the boy for the minor offense, if fault it be, and in so doing experiences the glowing satisfaction of one who has done his duty by his erring offspring.

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His wife who was not invited to a social event attended by prominent women in the community may in her exasperation taunt her husband for not making more money and berate him for chastising their son. Neither is aware of the basic motives which have actuated them. The man does not realize that he has released his irritation in dealing harshly with a normal small boy, and the wife is quite unaware that in making her husband the object of scornful reproach she has given vent to the social slight which she has suffered.

Let us suppose that the business man has won another customer and completed a profitable commercial transaction with him, and that his wife has received an invitation to an exclusive social affair. In the home that evening he may lavish excessive praise upon her for the dinner although it may not be as good as the one he ate in wretched mood on a day when he experienced slight business reverses. She may compliment him in extravagant terms for being a good provider, a considerate husband, and a sensible father. Both may heap demonstrations of affection upon their young son who may prefer to be left to his own devices.

The man may not know that he is being moved, not by direct appreciation of the food, the loveliness of his wife, and paternal tenderness, but by the luscious feeling of business success. She may be ignorant of the fact that gratification over social recognition has incited her to exaggerated laudation of her husband's achievements and qualities, and the extreme expression of love for the child. Only those who ruthlessly examine the origins of their attitudes and behavior know how human nature is all the time confusing us.

Frequently a hostile attitude such as jealousy, leads

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to an unconscious elaboration of a real or imaginary circumstance, which works against the interests of the person who is the object of malice. Several young women may envy another her fiancé. When they meet they may unwittingly spread a tale about her which increases in ill will with repetition. Miss Brown says to Miss Black, "I understand that the romance between Miss Jones and Mr. Smith is not progressing as rapidly and satisfactorily as I had anticipated." Miss Black says to Miss White, "I have been told in strict confidence that the ardor of Mr. Smith toward Miss Jones is cooling." Miss White says to Miss Green, "Have you heard that Miss Jones and Mr. Smith have quarreled?" Miss Green says to Miss Blue, "It is reliably reported that on account of an estrangement from Miss Jones, Mr. Smith has left town." Miss Blue says to Miss Gray, "What a pity that the engagement of Miss Jones and Mr. Smith has been finally and absolutely broken." Miss Gray calls on Miss Jones and says in dulcet tones, "My dear, you will not misunderstand me when I express my regrets that your engagement to Mr. Smith has been terminated." Miss Jones says to Miss Gray, "No doubt there are those who wish that the report were true. Mr. Smith and I attended the opera last night. I am still wearing a gorgeous engagement ring, to which another ring will be added in a few weeks. You and your friends will shortly receive invitations to the wedding."

MEANINGFUL MISTAKES

Many hidden wishes and motives are expressed in slight accidents, lapses of memory, slips of tongue or pen, and errors of almost every description. A wife may ask

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her husband to buy an article at a department store. He may forget to go to the department store because he does not like the proprietor or because he believes his wife is extravagant. Some of us may forget to thank our hostess for her hospitality because we have been bored by the other guests and by her. I may lose a pair of gloves because I have never liked them and wished that I did not possess them. I may mislay a necktie because somebody whose taste I respect has intimated that it is not becoming.

Recently I wrote a letter to a friend in which I stated that I was enclosing a certain pamphlet which I supposed would be of value to him. I misaddressed the envelope but noticed the error. I destroyed this envelope and correctly addressed another. When I was about to drop the letter into the mailbox I perceived that I had not stamped it. It then dawned upon me that inadvertently I had not enclosed the pamphlet. No doubt a part of my mind was trying to call attention to the omission of the pamphlet through the errors in addressing and mailing the letter. I have not been able to unearth the reason why I did not enclose the pamphlet in the first place.

Not all mistakes, blunders, and slips are the products of underground incentives. Sheer weariness of mind and body, or the deflection of the attention from the matter in hand by a strong, startling, and novel stimulus, or an illness may be the basis of a lapse of memory or an error. On the other hand, it is well established that motives concealed or revealed do account for an astonishing number of the errors of daily living. We often invent excuses for mishaps which proceed from questionable or objectionable motives. The honest and intelligent man asks himself why

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he has forgotten something or made a slip and accepts the answer whether or not it casts reflections upon himself. Prejudices, fears, anxieties, dislikes, and other human frailties tend to manifest themselves in a thousand variations from the normal forms of behavior.

A mania for collecting odd or ordinary articles may be motivated by desires of which one is but vaguely if at all conscious. Gathering a store of things may be a compulsion which the collector interprets simply as absorption in a pastime, a hobby in which he is interested for its own sake. He may be persuaded that he is not actuated by an impulse other than a disinterested desire to accumulate specimens of something in which he takes delight. He makes additions to his collection as opportunity permits, exhibits it to his friends and occupies leisure hours with it. He may dwell upon the history of the articles he has spent years in gathering, such as postage stamps, canes, bottles, firearms, pipes, and knives. He may declare that his collection is a summary of the history of an industry, of a social custom, of the political fortunes of a nation. A cultured man in England has a cabinet filled with specimens of tumblers made in different periods, the collection as a whole representing the stages through which the drinking glass industry in his country has passed.

The astute student of human nature may suspect that a collector's professed amateurish interest disguises a deeply buried but active wish or aversion. The acquisition of postage stamps of foreign lands may be the unconscious expression of a hidden and thwarted desire to travel abroad, to observe the native customs of other lands, and to experience the thrills of adventure. In fact, a man chained to a

desk in an office, or to a counter in a shop, or to a school room, or to a farm may by means of a stamp collection and the knowledge of foreign parts it has inspired him to acquire, lead a life of imaginative variation and excitement, which his ordinary life denies him in reality. Such an outlet for wanderlust is harmless if it does not occupy a disproportionate amount of time and convert one into a habitual day-dreamer; in fact, it may be a release which is actually constructive and healthful. It relieves the dullness of a monotonous existence. The individual returns to his own world refreshed and prepared to cope with its difficulties.

Morbid fears and hate compulsions are frequently given unintentional expression in the collecting of objects. A certain man had a veritable mania for acquiring pieces of lead pipe. In the course of time he possessed a strange assortment of pieces of lead pipe, some short, others long, some thin, others thick, some light, others heavy. The collection and the owner's intense pride in it, coupled with more than a trace of vindictive satisfaction, aroused the suspicions of a shrewd friend. An analysis disclosed that the collector had an enemy whom he secretly longed to put out of the way. He seemed to be quite unaware of the purpose which actuated him to accumulate pieces of lead pipe. Evidently he had no conscious knowledge of his intention of dealing his antagonist a deadly blow upon the head with a section of lead pipe. The reason he gave for accumulating specimens of lead pipe was that he wanted to have a unique collection. He declared that he was the only man either he or any acquaintance of his knew who possessed such an aggregation. When he was confronted with the

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probable real reason he was honest enough to admit that he had an enemy whom he wished he might dispose of through an act of violence. Self-knowledge of this sort should lead to the casting out of hatred by brotherly love and a sincere attempt to make a friend of the adversary.

FALSE IMPUTATIONS

Furthermore, many of us delude ourselves by imputing to others the foibles or failings with which we ourselves are justly chargeable. An effort is made to appease a stung conscience by imputing to another the misdeed which the accuser himself has committed. A person may lose his temper and excitedly insist that the other has lost control of himself, which spectacle may afford the bystander considerable amusement as well as food for reflection. In order to justify his own infidelity a husband may accuse his wife, who leads a blameless life, of lax conduct.

A prude is generally a person who by being extremely censorious of the behavior of other people is defending a conflict between conscience and desire. The prude, affecting excessive propriety, directs hostility and accusations against persons who may be of good character. A good man is more often unjustly condemned than a bad man; for a bad man not only does not torture the conscience of another, but makes him feel superior and righteous by comparison.

The man who waxes indignant over the iniquities perpetrated by others may quite unconsciously be attempting to forget his own shortcomings or divert attention from them and to salve his own conscience. The barely visible speck of dust in a brother's eye is hotly and publicly de-

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nounced; and the beam, large and strong enough to be the principal horizontal support of a house, in the reprover's own eye is ignored. To be aware of the faults of others and to fulminate against them fills the self-appointed judge with a feeling of virtue which renders him insensible to the same or worse character defects of his own. One may be too indignant over wrongdoing actually perpetrated by a hardened enemy of society to be conscious of one's own shortcomings and to forsake them. It is, of course, freely admitted that not all adverse moral judgments are simply the ascription of one's own evils to others who are innocent. Wrong is not always exposed and upbraided by an incensed critic who is motivated by a sense of personal guilt. The mind at mischief does, however, tend to escape moral torment occasioned by trespasses by rightly or unjustly accusing another of the same or different reprehensible acts.

INVERSION OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

A large number of instances of delusion are directly traceable to misunderstanding, ignorance, and unreasonable presuppositions. A girl may sincerely believe that another is trying to rob her of her beau although no such intention is harbored. A high school boy may honestly believe that his failure in an examination in algebra has been imposed upon him by a spiteful teacher, although no such a plot has been formed. Failure to secure a desired job may be ascribed to the employer's prejudice or to lack of influential friends. The girl either does not know or blindly refuses to admit that she is deficient in charm, the school boy that he has not mastered the principles of algebra, the job-hunter that he lacks the skill necessary for doing the re-

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quired work or the ability to convince the employer of his worth. Irrelevant factors are held responsible for personal deficiencies.

In many cases we dislike a person, an experience or a thing because we do not fathom the real reason for the aversion. An unpleasant, not to say revolting, occurrence and another incident, the one being independent of the other, may happen at the same time or place. The two are not associated with each other in a relation of cause and effect; but the mind, playing tricks on us, connects them and interprets the one as the cause of the other. A man had a pronounced distaste for pickled beets. For years he insisted that he disliked pickled beets because they disagreed with him. Finally his mother laid bare the origin of his inference. She recalled that when he was a small boy he accompanied his parents on a sea voyage. A storm was raging. One day just after he had eaten a portion of pickled beets, of which dish he was very fond, he became violently seasick and promptly regurgitated. In the depths of his being the eating of pickled beets and nausea with its miserable concomitant were associated. The former was supposed to produce the latter. The man, in possession of the knowledge of the source of his notion, made the appropriate mental adjustment. Now he eats pickled beets and, so far from being made ill by them, relishes them and digests them without discomfort.

SHEER LISTLESSNESS

For many cases of failure no excuses are invented. The person spares himself the pain of thinking of his precarious situation or is too lazy to concoct a pretense. A man of

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distressing faults, failures, and lacks was asked if he ever gave serious thought to his defects and his plight. He replied that whenever he sat down to contemplate his shortcomings he invariably fell fast asleep. The reply amused the inquirer, who did not comprehend that sleeping in this instance was a convenient method of escaping from thinking of the unpleasant sources of predicaments and faults. The victim thought he displayed an independent, trustful, and carefree spirit when, instead of facing his difficulties and being disturbed by them, he was so relaxed that sleep overtook him. Slumber was the form of flight from depressing facts, which best suited his disposition and preserved his self-esteem.

OUTWITTING ONESELF

Is the person who is motivated by unrecognized desires, attitudes, preferences, excuses, and dislikes normal? Is he mentally ill? So long as he is personally serene, associates with others acceptably, and is a useful member of the community he is not abnormal. The mentally disordered are unable successfully to cope with the practical problems of daily living. Not that anybody is a perfectly organized human being. Everybody is more or less deceived by his own mental processes. The normal person is aware of possible self-deceptions and makes the discovery and elimination of them a continuous campaign. He examines himself with a view to self-improvement.

The abnormal individual is blind to forces, hidden or revealed, which induce inconsistent action, social friction, loose thinking, and emotional states which are destructive of inward harmony and peace of mind. No serious and sus-

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tained effort is made to determine the nature of the springs of unapproved conduct and to purify them. The abnormal deluded man, although not necessarily content and satisfied, defends himself and resents adverse criticism of his behavior, his opinions, and his attitudes. The normal person is hopeful in the face of the unearthed spurs of faulty activity, confesses his failings and amends his ways.

The best defense of one's reputation and dignity is sustained good conduct, useful work, and wholesome relationships with other people. Such a course is perhaps impossible to maintain under all the varied trying circumstances which surround and influence us all. Accuracy and carefulness, complete honesty with oneself and constant vigilance, self-analysis and self-discipline, at all times and under all conditions, are simply beyond the power of all save an elect few. The best that the ordinary mortal can do is to uproot pretense of substantial achievement and to disdain specious excuse for unpardonable failure when such delusions are made manifest by a mind aware of its own deceptions. Fortunate is the man who is perturbed by removable limitations and is engaged in an unceasing process of self-improvement.

A friend who is so discerning that he penetrates and exposes another's foibles, disguises, and faults is an invaluable counselor. The man who profits by the insight of his friend is wise. In fact, the seriously deluded need the help of understanding counselors.

CHAPTER VIII

DRUNKENNESS

IN the movies the drunken man, as a rule, provides comic relief. His antics, his inane remarks, his minor mishaps, his slips of the tongue all convulse the thoughtless auditors with laughter and mirth. He weaves from side to side in going to his home, has difficulties in finding the keyhole, and once inside the house drops articles of clothing in strange places and finally staggers into bed. Even the after-effects experienced the next morning, such as a splitting headache and a tortured memory of the scenes of the night before, are invested with humorous touches designed to make the viewer of the film chuckle.

To be sure, now and then rum is the cause of the downfall and degeneration of a character of promise, social position, and ability in the fictitious world of the films. The deplorable stages through which such a character passes drain the tear glands of the tender-hearted movie-goer, but the melancholy effects of liquor addiction are rarely pictured on the screen. The intended mirth-provoking responses of the drunkard are the ones which are most frequently presented.

The film players drink cocktails nonchalantly and as

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a matter of course; the effect of alcoholic beverages in most film exhibitions is as harmless as that of root beer. In fact, cocktail drinking is supposed to indicate sophistication. The imbibing of liquor is taken for granted as much as the eating of lamb chops and ice cream. If anything, it is assumed to be a part of worldly-wise living and no more harmful than the drinking of coffee or water. It is significant that the villain in the play drains a glass of potent liquor before he does his dastardly deed. Strong drink is supposed to fortify him in the realization of his shameful intention.

ALCOHOL THE GREAT DECEIVER

In real life the situation is often radically different. The confirmed drunkard, so far from furnishing comedy that enlivens the lives of those with whom he intimately associates, is the producer of tragedy both for himself and for them. So far from being a gay and comical character, he is a forlorn and degenerate figure. To be sure, an intoxicated man, staggering in the streets and talking nonsense, amuses the unthinking spectators. To be compelled by circumstances to live with him and to suffer the deprivations he creates is far from being entertaining.

One may roughly divide drinkers into two classes. The one division consists of moderate drinkers, of persons who seldom if ever drink to excess, and who are not the deplorable victims of drunkenness and its miserable sequels. They proudly affirm that they control liquor, that liquor does not control them. Although they escape the devastating consequences of heavy drinking they do set a bad example for those who are unable to exercise moderation themselves.

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Although the man who drinks in moderation practices self-discipline, some who are influenced by him are seemingly incapable of self-restraint and, therefore, become the slaves of alcoholic drinks. A percentage of drinkers, difficult to specify, after years of moderate casual imbibing with no harm to themselves, join the ranks of the problem-drinkers. Many who are intemperate drinkers were once temperate drinkers.

The second class consists of those who imbibe so freely that they are frequently intoxicated and pay the wages their excesses exact, such as loss of employment, poverty, wretched health, alienation of friends, surrender of self-respect, and deterioration of character. They may well be called problem-drinkers. It is with such that we shall largely occupy ourselves in this discussion.

The problem-drinker consumes liquor for an effect he wants to achieve. In a sense all drinking, moderate or intemperate, is done for an effect. Some people drink for the sake of conviviality, sociability, good fellowship; but the genuine problem-alcoholic seeks to flee from a problem by taking refuge in the bottle. The casual drinker does not try to escape from himself or a predicament by the alcoholic route. Drunkenness is a disease, a destroyer of mental health, an ailment which has its roots in the refusal of the victim to face and absorb adverse circumstances. It is well to bear in mind the distinction between the two types of drinkers.

It should be clearly understood that alcohol is not a stimulant, that it does not increase vitality, does not sharpen the wits, make one stronger physically, enable one to hear and see better. Alcohol, which is the intoxicating principle

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in distilled or fermented liquors, is a colorless, inflammable liquid. The popular opinion that spirituous beverages revive a fatigued personality is misleading. The error is still quite general and confusing, not to say pernicious.

Alcohol is not like the active principle in coffee and tea, caffeine, which arouses the activity of the brain; in fact, in some cases coffee and tea stimulate to such an extent that one is unable to sleep at night. The radical element in liquor is actually a depressive, a kind of narcotic, and not a tonic or an exhilarant. It is a sedative. It produces a mild paralysis of the muscles, retards the processes of the mind, and dulls the capacity for criticism. Any effects that seem to contradict these statements are false, deceptive, and unreal.

The elation which the drunken man often feels is the outcome, not of a stimulant, but of the removal of restrictions imposed upon him by parents, teachers, conscience, and other agents and forces of ordered society. Furthermore, his condition may be a retreat from troubles which he considers too great to be endured. Alcohol solves no problem, but leaves the drinker in a worse predicament than that in which he was before he resorted to the bottle. Generally speaking, it relaxes body and mind.

CHEERFUL LUNACY

Three fairly well distinguishable stages can be detected and described in the progressive results of drinking. The first is marked by a lack of one's usual best judgment. A wise man of the dim past warned judges lest they drink and forget the law and pervert the rights of the afflicted. It takes but little of the active ingredient in spirituous

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liquors to bring about an impairment of intelligence and the loss of skill. A physician who has drunk a glass or two of beer may not have the professional judgment which the care of a patient requires. A small amount of alcohol drunk by an otherwise competent surgeon may endanger the life of a patient on the operating table. A cocktail or two, carefreely drunk by an automobile driver, may lead to a fatal accident. So long as no emergency arises and only the habitual responses are required, the drinking driver is not likely to come to grief; but when an unusual situation confronts him, one that calls for quick and good judgment and prompt action, his confused state of mind may occasion a collision. About ten per cent of all automobile accidents on our highways are directly traceable to drivers who are under the influence of liquor.

The moth-eaten story of the mouse which in the cellar it infested imbibed a few drops of liquor dripping from the spigot of a cask of liquor, reared itself on its hind legs, and exclaimed, "Now let me fight the cat that has sought to take my life," is psychologically sound. Liquor arouses a recklessness through the suspension of good judgment. If the cat had put in its appearance and attacked the slightly intoxicated mouse, it would have fallen an easy prey to the onslaught. The attitude of the mouse was not that of courage based on competence, but foolhardiness born of indiscretion. Similarly, the man under the influence of liquor may display bravado, defiance without sense.

One or two drinks of hard liquor—indeed, in many cases, a glass or two of beer or light wine—will loosen the tongue and incite one to say many things which one would, when sober, consider undignified, unwise, or positively con-

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trary to the personal code of behavior. Giddiness, silliness, and sexual indiscretions are the common sequels of drinking enough liquor temporarily to corrupt good manners and dull conscience. Under the influence of drink the restraints of good breeding, the dictates of an elevated standard of taste, and the mandates of honor are all cast aside with a reckless disregard for consequences which is appalling.

One man who has imbibed just enough to blunt intelligence becomes extremely talkative, revealing private matters or boasting about real or imaginary exploits. Another becomes tearful and bewails his sorrowful lot. Still another becomes sentimental and maudlin, and wants to dance or make love; he is deprived of the control of the sex instinct and waxes amorous. Yet another becomes quarrelsome and takes offense at any remark that his confused mind construes as an insult; he suspects a real or imaginary violation of his rights and expresses resentment.

It is not without significance, as already hinted, that when some men are about to do an evil deed they fortify themselves with alcohol. Strong drink imparts a false sense of courage, produces a willingness to do that from which sober individuals shrink, induces them to imagine that the proposed action is not only right but a sacred obligation, or makes them heedless, reckless, and headstrong. After the wrong has been perpetrated and the effects of liquor on the mind have evaporated, they are amazed at what they have done and are often plunged into remorse.

SURRENDER OF BODILY CONTROL

In the second stage, strong drink affecting the hind-

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brain brings about loss of co-ordination. In the normal person the various parts of the body work together and not independently or in opposition to one another. Alcohol destroys the harmony and co-operation which normally exist among the different organs of the body. The drunken man, like a very young child, cannot properly control his muscles; he does not correctly judge distances and is physically too unsteady to act effectively. In grasping at an object he is likely to overreach or underreach. His inability to fit the key into the keyhole is a well-known instance; his hand trembles, and his vision is distorted. The muscles of the legs do not function normally; in fact, the muscles of one do not work in sympathy with those of the other; hence, the drunkard lurches from side to side and stumbles and staggers.

Each eye of the sober individual forms an image of an object seen; and the mind unites both images so that he does not see two objects, as it were, but only the one which is actually present. The drunken man, deprived of this unique power of fusion sees double. He is physically at loose ends. Like a wheel loosely hung, he moves unsteadily, from one side of the highway to the other, under- and over-estimating distances, and seeing two things of a kind when only one is really in view. Intelligence is abdicated, reason is dethroned, bodily control is surrendered. The secondary stage of alcoholic progression is one of organic as well as mental disorganization.

UNDER THE TABLE

The third stage is that of stupor. In this state the drunkard is generally locked in the arms of an intensely

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profound sleep. He is insensible. He does not know what has been or is happening to him and is, of course, oblivious to what is going on in his presence. He is completely relaxed, and for the time being is so unconscious that the infliction of bodily injury is not felt and does not arouse him from his stupor. In this condition he is harmless, for he is incapable of overt action of any kind. He is too befuddled to be a menace to others.

Hearing, seeing, and even feeling to an extreme degree are suspended. A wise man of old places these words upon the lips of a drunkard: "They have stricken me, and I was not hurt; they have beaten me, and I felt it not." After hours of unconsciousness the drunkard awakes. His head aches so violently that he thinks the pain will drive him mad. A thirst tortures him; he experiences a scorching dryness of the throat and mouth with an intense craving for cold liquids. Nausea is often the unpleasant accompaniment of the painful awakening.

Prolonged and excessive drinking of hard liquor induces a disorder called delirium tremens. The onset is marked by terrifying sights of horrible things not actually present, by voices proceeding from no external sources, by trembling of the hands, and by inability to speak distinctly. The victims suffer the tortures of those condemned to the horrors of the damned. In most cases, the sufferer ardently desires release from alcoholism—until the attack has ceased.

FIRST STEPS TOWARD SOBRIETY

Can a problem-drinker be set free from the alcoholic bonds? The answer to this question is that his deliverance from the demon that controls him depends upon several

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factors, the majority of which must reside in himself. In the first place, he must be fairly consumed by a consistent longing for a cure of the disease with which he is afflicted. Only if the problem-drinker is honest enough to admit the existence of a situation which is injuring him and brave enough to examine it, and is animated by a burning desire to eliminate it, if that is possible, or bear it like a man, can he be cured of alcoholism. The alcoholic may need help in bringing to light and subduing the state of affairs which has originated his inordinate use of alcoholic drinks.

Tricks and entreaties, which well-intentioned friends may resort to, will fail if the will, strong and constant, for permanent sobriety is absent from the drinker. The man who is suffering from a headache after a drunken spree, or who has an attack of delirium tremens in which he has seen serpents approaching him with deadly intent, may for the time being desire to be delivered from the drink evil. However sincere he may be at the time, when the headache has ceased, nausea has subsided, and the imaginary serpents have fled, his desire for a lasting cure may weaken and collapse. Many a counselor can testify that he has been appealed to for guidance and aid by an alcohol addict who returned to the bottle shortly after the distress of a drunken carousal was relieved.

In certain parts of a European country intoxicated persons who are arrested by the police are given jail sentences and restricted to a diet consisting solely of bread dipped into wine. For the first day or two such a diet seems to be most savory to the prisoner in his cell, but in the course of time it palls and then induces a revolt of the

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stomach and vomiting. The very thought of liquor-dipped bread becomes nauseous, distasteful, and abhorrent. Needless to say, unless an all-absorbing longing for a cure of the alcohol disease exists, the prisoner, soon after he regains his freedom, will again seek comfort and forgetfulness in drink. He may for a short time experience a loathing for liquor, but the craving for the desired effects of alcoholic drink will in all probability prevail.

It is impossible to overstress the part which a sincere and steadfast desire for a cure plays in the deliverance of the drunkard from his bondage. A temporary wish for release, a mood or whim, is inadequate. When the victim begs and pleads for help and is actually willing to do anything that may be prescribed for his relief, the battle against alcohol and its miserable results is likely to be won. In fact, in such a case the sufferer has already in part transcended his disability. Until the problem-drinker is in earnest, his appeals for deliverance are superficial and fruitless. Unless the drinker is forcibly and permanently institutionalized and denied all spirituous beverages, the beginning of a lasting cure must be voluntarily made.

Of course, it is understood that the individual whom we have in mind is to mingle freely with good people, that he is not to withdraw from his family, that he is to continue or plan to be active in his trade, business, or profession. I am not assuming that he is necessarily going to enter an institution for the cure of drunkards. Altogether too many persons who undergo treatment in a sanitarium for alcoholism fall victims to strong drink sooner or later after they are released as cured, simply because they have had no overwhelming urge for a cure coupled with a frank

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facing of the reasons for their enslavement. Actual deliverance from the power of the underlying causes is not always achieved in hospitals and retreats.

In the second place, most problem-drinkers need the help of an understanding friend. The more intelligent and self-reliant may be cured without the guidance of a counselor who has had successful experience in dealing with alcohol addicts. In almost every community there is somebody who has the tact and wisdom to advise and support the man who really wants to live a consistently sober life. A physician, or a schoolteacher, or a social worker, or a churchman of sympathetic ability will consider it a privilege to come to the aid of the one who wants to break the shackles of intoxicants and to be a free person.

In the third place, there should be no tapering off and no exceptions. It is best to stop drinking at once and for all. To eliminate the drink evil of one at large by progressively reducing the amount of liquor consumed until finally none at all is drunk is for most addicts about as difficult as it is to fire a shotgun by degrees. A complete and consistent break with all intoxicants is the method which is recommended. No valid reason can be given, as will be increasingly clear as the cure is outlined below, for adopting the procedure of gradually diminishing the periodic intake. So long as the drinker under treatment is permitted to taste liquor, alcoholism is provided an opportunity to re-establish itself.

The individual should refrain from the use of intoxicants in any form on all occasions. To allow exceptions to occur is to take advantage of circumstances which may constitute fresh departures for drunken orgies. The man

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who drinks because a special occasion has arisen, such as the birth of a child, the marriage of a friend, or the safe return of his wife from foreign parts may make the alcoholic celebration of a joyous event the excuse for relapsing into his evil practice. The alcoholic imp of Satan, if he is now and then permitted to function in order festively to recognize a uniquely happy occasion, has a genius for reviving and resuming permanent control of the individual. It is remarkable how often such interruptions in the process of reformation can present themselves. Almost any occurrence can be construed as a pretext for a drink. Exceptions are likely to be made with such frequency that alcoholism recovers all its disputed ground.

The belief, widespread and persistent, that sudden and total abstinence is injurious to health is incorrect. The person who abandons the bottle promptly and finally will not suffer bodily illness or unendurable mental anguish. People who abstain from the consumption of liquor definitely and without gradually diminishing drafts will neither die nor grow insane. Temporary discomfort may develop, but not mental collapse or a physical ailment. To renounce all kinds of liquor and henceforth not taste a drop will impair neither mind nor body.

WHY MEN DRINK

In the fourth place, the cause of drinking must be brought to light and conquered. Just as every disease has an origin, known or undiscovered, the drink problem in each case has a definite incitement. A reason underlies drinking for effect. In general, it may be said that the genuine problem-drinker becomes mildly or extremely in-

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toxicated in order to escape a memory, condition, or situation which is distressing. Drinking is an attempted form of release from stern facts which are judged to be overwhelming. It is, so to speak, temporary suicide which supposedly renders one oblivious to one's griefs. Instead of facing the grim circumstances and analyzing them, and then manfully coping with them with the resources at command, correcting what can be remedied and courageously bearing what cannot be subdued, the drunkard is a shirker and a coward. He tries to run away from the trials and vexations of life. By deadening his sensibilities for a season, he seeks relief from the burdens which are the lot of the majority of men. Only a small minority of men have never known trials and griefs which have tested to the utmost their moral stamina. The fact that intoxicants lull the mind to forgetfulness of a desperate situation was well known to the ancients. One of them advised, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul: let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

The specific tribulations from which the drunkard seeks to flee are legion. Poverty, boredom, loneliness, vocational failure, financial loss, domestic unhappiness, ill health, and the lack of a point of view which assimilates the trials of life, are numbered among the more common reasons why men drink to excess in order to forget their woes. It would be impossible to make a complete list of the facts and circumstances which induce people to seek the solace and comfort of the alcoholic demon masquerading as a ministering angel.

John West, orphaned at an early age, was reared by his

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grandmother who completely dominated him. Moved by inclination and encouraged by an uncle, John wanted to go to college and later to a law school in order to prepare for a legal career. His grandmother promptly and effectively diverted him from his laudable ambition, and persuaded him to become a business man. He is moderately successful in business but vocationally unhappy. In due time he was married to a woman who has a profitable business career. She, like his grandmother, imposes her imperial will upon him. In fact, she is his grandmother's successor. Frustrated and thwarted, John West periodically becomes intoxicated. When he is sober he knows that strong drink, unless he musters the courage to be a man and to face his situation and to assert himself, will ruin his business in a few years, alienate his friends and make him solely dependent on his wife for his daily bread. His wife does not perceive that she is contributing to his delinquency. In fact she has intimated that she will divorce him, but her hints have not induced him to reform. He is too cunning to antagonize her completely and forfeit the luxuries she showers upon him, despite his resentment of her control over him.

Incidentally, a secondary cause of alcoholic carousals is often the desire to occupy the center of the stage. In many cases the drunkard is ignored when he is sober, but when he is intoxicated he attracts attention to himself. He may not win the approval of others who are present, but he is not overlooked and disregarded. His woeful condition demands consideration. His disorderly conduct may arouse fear, and he may revel in the diabolical power he wields over those unable to subdue him. Unemployable, impoverished, and alienated by neighbors, he may secure recognition

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which he covets by periodic drunken brawls. He may take a savage delight in an alcoholic orgy which humiliates his wife and children in the presence of invited guests. Until he deplors this beastly method of obtaining notice his case is hopeless. In fact, many a confirmed drinker secretly prides himself on his reputation for being the town's most abusive and offensive drunkard.

I must admit that many wives hinder rather than aid their problem-drinking husbands. Too many wives make the drunkard worse either by continually nagging and upbraiding him or by indulging and humoring him and providing him with temporal support. To gratify the whims of the drunkard, to relieve him of all financial responsibility, to supply him with the comforts of life and money with which to buy drink, to let him eat the bread of idleness, is to entrench more firmly his alcoholic vice. Reprisals, punishments and other drastic measures employed by wives as a rule only incite the drinking husbands to the consumption of an increased amount of liquor and to a multiplication of drunken carousals. A self-righteous wife, one who sits in judgment upon her husband and condemns him out of hand, and who is either unable or unwilling to understand his plight, is extremely aggravating. Constant nagging only increases the desire for alcoholic escape. I am ungallant enough to state with deep feeling that many wives have much for which to answer.

It is sheer folly for a woman to marry a drunkard, confident that in the course of time she will reform him. I have yet to encounter a single instance in which the wife after marrying has wrought the miracle of reclamation she was unable to perform during the period of courtship and

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engagement. Many problem-drinkers, when sober, are affable, attractive, and generous, although beasts when in their cups. An idealistic, romantic young woman may be charmed by the sober man and fall in love with him. If she takes seriously his alcoholic defections and her pre-nuptial efforts to redeem him fail, she may be so obtuse as to believe that when they are married and living together she will wean him from alcoholism. What she has failed to do, because she lacked insight and he the will, before she accompanied him to the altar, she is not at all likely to accomplish afterward.

CURE PERFORCE

Now and then uncontrollable exigencies cure the problem-drinker. William Jones was employed as a janitor of an apartment building for twenty-five years. He was a bachelor. He had no intimate friends, although he did have many acquaintances. All his relatives lived in distant lands. He spent much of his leisure time reading the better periodicals and good books. He took pride in his work. The tenants of the apartment building frequently expressed their appreciation of his faithful and competent janitorial services.

To the consternation of his employer and the tenants, William began to neglect his duties. The smell of whiskey tainted his breath. Investigation disclosed that William spent the major fraction of each day in his room in a drunken stupor. Friendly people who were concerned learned that William's eyesight had been failing rapidly, in fact, to such an extent that he was unable to perform his duties with customary efficiency. The eye specialist to

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whom William was sent reported that for undiscoverable causes the vision of the drinker was diminishing and that neither glasses, an operation nor medication would be efficacious. William had resorted to strong drink in a vain effort to find relief from loneliness, and consolation for inability to read. He had squandered his modest savings on drink.

His well-wishers reluctantly committed him to a municipal home. Here he was not given any liquor whatever. He was unable to procure any. He was made an orderly in the hospital affiliated with the municipal home and assigned to night duty. Under careful and considerate supervision he soon learned to discharge his duties with commendable fidelity. He developed a genuine interest in the patients and in their care. William discovered that several of his old-time friends were inmates of the home. He had the companionship which he craved as well as work which he liked. He was cured of the drink disease perforce.

William was taken in hand by good people who had his welfare at heart; and his case was so desperate personally, vocationally, and financially that his preferences could not be consulted. He was a man under social restraint. It should be said to his credit that he made an excellent adjustment to his new surroundings; that after he realized that resistance to the imposed procedure was useless, he adapted himself, made friends, and co-operated with those charged with the administration of the institution. When I last visited him, he was in good health, enjoyed the company of his fellow-inmates, took pride in doing useful work, and quite artlessly remarked that on Saturday nights he and other orderlies have to lay firm hands upon the

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violently intoxicated who are brought to the hospital for emergency treatment. So long as he remains in the municipal home he will be sober and content, but if he should be released he might or might not again be victimized by alcoholism.

HOME REMEDIES

Some man will inquire, "Is it possible to be cured of the drink disease at home and in the usual surroundings?" Many a problem-drinker does not have the means to defray the cost of a cure in an institution, and if he is to be restored to normality will have to undergo a process of reclamation without leaving his family and friends and without a considerable financial outlay. The cure can actually be effected at home if he really desires release, is willing to follow directions for his own good, and will co-operate with one who is qualified to give moral support and practical directions.

He must, of course, realize that the consumption of intoxicants is his method of sidestepping adversity or another obstacle. He must understand, and admit without a trace of evasion, that through the use of alcohol he has been avoiding life and not facing it. It is likely that he has a strong distaste for liquor, and drinks it because it helps him to dodge a vexatious issue in his life. The number of drinkers who endure their aversion to the savor of liquor in order to secure the effect desired is amazingly large. He must have the courage and the frankness to examine his life, to explore his situation and to bring to light that which has been the occasion of his drinking. A relative or friend or counselor, if intelligent and candid, may help the derelict

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to see himself as he really is and to expose what he must conquer in order to be delivered from the chains which liquor has forged. It is not necessary to leave home and to enter a sanitarium in order to discover, scrutinize, and absorb the producing cause of alcoholism.

If he seeks a cure at home, he should realize that in most cases little bodily harm is done by alcohol. The injury is mental and moral rather than physical. The human body can stand an enormous amount of alcoholic abuse. Alcohol is, of course, a variety of poison; but the body of the average man, if given an opportunity, will eliminate it in a few weeks. Hot baths are recommended, for they relax one and stimulate the process of toxic elimination. Elaborate treatments which only a hospital can give are not needed to repair the damage which intoxicants have done the body.

After all, alcohol has done more mischief and injury to the victim's character, to his relationships with other people, to his purse, to his work, and to his standing in the community than to his body. Alcohol does, however, dull the appetite; when a man abandons liquor, hunger will develop; he needs nourishing food. Furthermore, bodily exercise in the open is beneficial, for it serves as a tonic, creates an appetite, improves the digestion, and induces sleep. Wood-chopping, gardening, ditch-digging, and the like are healthful, just because they are outdoor, muscular, and elemental occupations. The indoor worker is in special need of life-giving outdoor activity.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS FORTIFICATION

Self-respect and self-esteem can be developed by achiev-

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ing the victory over the demon that lurks in the bottle. The person who is waging war against intoxicants should bear in mind that his wife and children, or parents, or other dependents, or friends need his companionship and practical help. There is more happiness and security in wholesome family and other intimate human relationships than there is in strong drink. Somebody who is competent may help him overcome his disability, but he should beware lest he become so dependent on his benefactor that he will not be able to stand on his own feet and fight his own battles in due course of time. He will find it easier and more pleasurable to engage in outdoor physical exercise with other people than to resort to such activity by himself. He needs good company. Let him lend a hand to others in trouble. Let him help unfortunate people. In unselfish service he will develop emancipated personality and the ability to withstand the wiles of alcohol.

Forgetfulness of personal conflicts through alcohol is not happiness, but merely a temporary release from nervous strain. True happiness is found in alertness, in a vivid consciousness of what one is entangled in coupled with heroic efforts to better one's circumstances, to overcome difficulties, and to endure with patience what cannot be eliminated. Happiness is not drunken stupor, but the vibrant, deliberate conquest of one's trials.

Let the man who craves deliverance take an honest and open pride in overcoming the obstruction which has dominion over him and which he has tried to ignore or evade by becoming a problem-drinker. A certain man confesses that he became addicted to whiskey because as a writer he was afraid that he was not a gifted author, but a

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failure. He feared that he was only a good reporter. Fear was the root cause. Liquor was the chosen means of escape from his sense of inferiority. Whatever the particular obstacle is, its presence and pernicious influence must be recognized and surmounted, or borne like a man. Nobody can really hurt one but onself. Whether it be a disappointing love affair, a family difficulty, loss of income, betrayal by those in whom one has reposed confidence, inability to realize a cherished ambition, or anything else, one must look it squarely in the eye and make the best possible adjustment.

Religious faith is a powerful ally of the drinker in his fight against alcoholism. It is a rallying center, an experience which collects the scattered energies of a man and unites them in a victorious whole. Religious forces kindle a desire to conquer personal limitations. They stabilize and fortify the person who stands face to face with the grief, loss, misunderstanding, which he has vainly combated with liquor. True religion motivates clear thinking and courageous action which, in turn, vanquish peril, turmoil, loneliness, and desolation. It stimulates the heroic in man. So far from shrinking from life or letting it overwhelm him, the hero, supported by an invincible religious faith, attacks his difficulties, carries his burden without bitterness and without seeking a treacherous refuge from affliction. The drinker who has caught the spirit of vital religion will develop his best possibilities through the conquest of his personality defect or hampering situation, and the casting out of the demon alcohol.

CHAPTER IX

SENTIMENTALISM

WE should suppose that with increased freedom of contact with one another, men and women of various age groups would be stimulated and enriched by a multitude of interests other than romantic love. For several reasons, a few of which will directly be specified, the contrary is actually true.

We are not now considering thousands of boys and girls in our high schools who mingle freely, study together, play together, learn to understand and appreciate one another, quite independently of romantic attachment. We are not now discussing girls and boys for whom churches and other agencies are providing social, recreational, and service opportunities, together with the necessary facilities and guidance. We are here concerned with a lost generation, as it were, with young men and young women, even with people in the thirties, who have cultivated few intimate relationships with members of the opposite sex apart from courtship and marriage.

THE LOVE-POSSESSED

Young men and women tell me that the relationship which exists between them is semi-romantic or completely

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romantic. It is either this or no reciprocal interest at all. The possibility and desirability of any other relationship do not seem to occur to most members of either sex above the high school age. The young man in the twenties demands the exclusive attention and devotion of the young woman with whom he associates—whether he is willing to be governed by the same principle is a point to which the reader may address himself. The relationship between the two either develops into romantic love and marriage or collapses.

If the relationship has extended over a period of several years and is then terminated, the young woman is stranded. The men from whom she set herself apart have in the meantime formed other contacts, and her prospects for marriage are therefore greatly reduced. She is often doomed to lead a life devoid of masculine companionship. Many of her most attractive friends of her own sex have married and are occupied with their domestic and social affairs. She is more or less isolated. The solitude of the unmarried state is not the worst fate that can befall a woman; but, as one spinster remarked, it is not particularly interesting or exciting. The young man, on the other hand, since this is still a masculine world, can repeat the experience, and if he is so disposed, engage in a long series of quasi-romantic affairs. In the end the outcome is futility for himself and frustration for his women victims.

Is the only motive that can bring a young man and a woman together the possibility or prospect of a permanent union that excludes all others of the opposite sex? Is it feasible and advantageous to develop a comradeship between the sexes that is fruitful and satisfying?

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The movies have played a prominent part in determining the nature of the relationship which exists between men and women. The movies are the school in which people of all ages are taught manners and morals, ideas of success and failure. The main adverse criticism of the movies is not that they still occasionally present indecencies, but that they inculcate in young and old alike a false conception of life, especially of wholesome relationships between the sexes.

In too many plays the stars fall in love with each other apart from a rich background of associations on a non-romantic basis. The standard fade-out consists of the surrender of the lovely lady to the manly arms and lips of her ardent lover. The many factors which enter into a successful marriage, such as finances, relatives, education, culture, disposition, health, and religion are, as a rule, ignored. The impression is given that love as the all-powerful solvent is equal to all the strains of everyday living. Romantic love, one gathers, is above and superior to differences in station and background which exist between the enamoured pair. It is not at all strange that young people in large numbers, having been exposed to the influence of the movies and other sexually potent forces in our present world, are not even aware that a relationship which is not that of sentimental romantic love is possible and profitable. Furthermore, misled by the artificiality and superficiality of film romances, they remain in woeful ignorance of the solid foundations of an enduring and felicitous marriage.

When the emotion of love controls a man, he does not see the object of his affections as she really is, but gilds her

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with a glory she does not possess and attributes to her qualities and virtues which may or may not be imaginary. After marriage he may discover that his wife cannot cook a simple meal, nor keep the household expenses within his income, is not in sympathy with his work, and differs with him in religious principles and practices.

To be sure, an even greater tragedy may overtake the woman who marries for love alone and without previous associations with young men which are independent of romantic interests. Blinded by romantic love she may be victimized. After the ardor of the honeymoon has diminished she may become painfully aware that there is a gulf fixed between herself and her husband that romantic love cannot bridge. Wholesome associations with a number of men before she married might have been broadening and have given her valuable insights into human nature and life with the result that she would have fallen in love with a suitable future mate.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not opposed to love, courtship, engagement, and marriage. I approve of relationships which culminate in fortunate marriages. In fact, the very thing I am advocating is the soundest basis for a satisfactory marriage. The groups of married couples with the lowest divorce rate are precisely the groups consisting of persons who learned to know each other during the period when they freely mingled without serious thought of romantic developments. The fact is that comradeship of young men and women, work and play on a non-romantic level, is the best preparation and background for success-

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ful marriage. When they associate merely as congenial companions and good friends, young people learn to know one another more nearly as they really are.

The question whether men are superior to women, or vice versa, is not pertinent. The query is idle since the distinctive characteristics of the one sex balance those of the other. The fact that in certain respects they are dissimilar is of such importance that its worth should be recognized and appropriated. Because they are different, men and women can supplement, help, inspire, and satisfy one another. I do not think men and women at the present time are mentally as far apart as adults of the opposite sexes were in bygone days. Our present mode of living, the nature of modern society, our political structure, the books and periodicals we read, the plays we see, and a multitude of other active agencies tend to bring the minds of men and women closer together so that some differences which once divided them no longer exist. In my opinion men have become more like women than women have become like men. The general mental trend, such as it may be, is toward the feminine rather than toward the masculine. Nevertheless, certain distinctions have not been obliterated, and it is these which indicate what men and women can give to one another besides love. Six may pass in rapid review before us.

First, men as a whole stress the main issues in a situation; women in general are sticklers for details. The fundamentals, rather than the incidentals, interest men. Women like to discuss the fine points of a proposition; but men like to call attention to the chief factors, the pivotal elements. Men are disposed to delve into a situation and to lift the

heart of it into prominence, meanwhile disregarding or paying scant attention to the marginal features. Clever women understand this difference, although they are likely, unless duly stimulated and directed, to underestimate its importance. A group of college girls told me that they prefer men teachers. When I asked them why, one of them explained that as a rule the examination questions asked by women teachers call for relatively unimportant items, whereas those asked by men teachers call for the fundamentals of the course studied. The woman is not likely to miss the main point altogether, but may not assign to it its full value; the man, occupied with the cardinal element, is likely to underrate or ignore the details without which a complete understanding of anything as a whole is impossible.

Second, women depend on feeling as a guide to action; men depend on thinking, or a process which they call cogitating. A woman considers her "because" a sufficient reason for believing a proposition or for having done what she did or proposes to do, or for her appraisal of something or somebody; and in an astonishing number of cases her impressions are vindicated. Men like to think that they think their way through to sound conclusions, but the majority of them do not realize what hard work thinking is and how few are capable of it. Only a minority of men have the ability and the willingness to reduce a problem to its constituent elements, to evaluate each correctly, and to formulate an adequate solution. Most men have no ideas of their own; they merely reproduce the ideas gathered from outside sources and call the procedure thinking. Some men, it should be conceded, do actually think.

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A woman's feeling, or intuition, or whatever one may call her impressions of people, is likely to be more reliable than the conclusions of a man arrived at by a process of putting two and two together. Unless she is biased by an emotion such as jealousy or envy, she exercises her gift of judging the character and disposition of people with a swiftness and precision which excite the wonderment of a man. On the other hand, a man's approach to lifeless things and his inferences from them are more accurate. The world of inanimate objects is not amenable to woman's native dependence on feeling as the basis of judgment.

Third, women as a class cherish the beautiful and the refined more than men as a whole do. Women like the adornments and the amenities of life to which too many men pay scant attention. It is true that to date there have been more great men artists than great women artists, musicians, composers, painters, architects, and even designers of women's garments. On the other hand, more women than men appreciate the works of art which the geniuses have produced. More men than women are artistic creators, but more women than men are appreciators of art in its several forms.

Woman brings color and beauty into everything she touches. A wholesome woman will enter a man's room and, rearranging the furniture and applying a deft hand here and there, transform its appearance. Neatness and orderliness are such reliable characteristics of dependable women that a fuel company instructs its deliverymen to inspect the kitchen of a household that has asked for credit. If the kitchen is clean and things are in their proper places he is

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to leave the fuel; if it is untidy and the sink is filled with unwashed dishes the middle of the forenoon or afternoon, he is to bring back the fuel.

For every man who plants a flower garden, there are dozens of women who cultivate gardens. A woman takes pleasure in a bouquet of flowers on a dining table, whereas a man may regard it as an obstruction to the view and a source of hayfever. What a dull and dreary and drab world this would be if women did not have a sense of the beautiful in sound, line, form, proportion, color, and sentiment!

Women are gratified by courtesy and politeness which men in their haste and preoccupation are prone to omit. A woman is pleased when a man in an elevator removes his hat, or rises when she enters a room. Men do much work that verges on the brutal, like butchering animals for food, work which offers little opportunity for the development of an appreciation of the beautiful. On the other hand, not all the tasks of the housekeeper are decorative and ornamental.

Fourth, women live in and for their children; men are individualists. When a child is born the mother is proud of her baby, but the father is proud of himself. She exclaims, "How adorable the child is!"; he proclaims to his amused friends, "What a phenomenal man I am!" The man lives in himself, in the present, in his work; the woman invests herself in her children and in their future. Man is the fighter, the competitor; woman is the conservator of the rights and welfare of posterity. She is willing to endure the hardships of the present in order that a better day may dawn for others yet unborn. Woman is a lover of peace and concord; man is aggressive and pugnacious. Most men

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put forth their best efforts when they have competition, whether it be in work or sports.

Fifth, in their attitude toward other people, women are more personal than men. Women are more disposed to become individually and emotionally involved in the delicate and intimate matters which are of major importance to others. It is difficult for a woman to forget that she is a woman and not to inject herself into situations with which she has to do. Her emotions are attached to specific objects and are more intense. The man on occasion forgets that he is a member of the male sex and is content simply to be a human being, and to take a more impartial attitude toward others and their affairs.

Since men are more impersonal and matter-of-fact, women of discernment prefer to consult a man doctor. This masculine propensity is another reason why many college girls prefer to go to a man teacher for confidential advice on private concerns. Men are more inclined to keep their professional and their personal affairs apart. Women themselves feel that men are more likely to preserve inviolate confidences reposed in them by troubled souls. On the other hand, a man who is on trial for his life and is guilty is more likely to be set at liberty if a proportion of the jurors are women, and his attorney appeals to their sympathies. They are more disposed than men to identify themselves emotionally with a man who has aroused their compassion and to be lenient with him even if they know him to be at fault.

Women are less charitable in their judgment of other women than in their opinions and appraisals of men. A woman sees in another woman a potential or actual rival;

she senses in a man, if he is at all appealing, a possible ally and protector. As a wife or employee or fiancée she fears the competition of other women. On the other hand, she is inclined to cater to the man who has caught her fancy.

Sixth, woman is physically the weaker vessel. The average woman is five inches shorter than the average man. She can squeeze forty-eight pounds, he can squeeze eighty-one pounds. Fifty-four per cent of her weight is strength; eighty-one per cent of his weight is strength. She does not control her muscles as quickly as he does; in her case a longer delay in acting occurs. For example, it takes her longer to apply the brakes of an automobile when she sights a "stop" signal. Her legs are shorter in comparison with the length of the trunk than those of a man. This difference makes it easier for her to touch the floor with her fingers without bending the knees, but handicaps her in running or jumping in competition with a man of average height and weight. Her lungs are relatively smaller, and she has only three-fourths as many red cells in her blood. Even if by a surgical miracle her chest could be sufficiently expanded and a man's lungs could displace hers, her blood would still lack the vitality of that of a man. Woman is built for beauty and grace and motherhood; man for strength and endurance. Physically less strong, she is at a disadvantage. She does not possess the prodigious amount of bodily energy that many tasks require and to which only the superior strength of hale and healthy men is equal.

It is conceded that in the foregoing representation of the differences between men and women sweeping statements may be detected. Exceptions to the generalizations will occur to the alert and observant reader. Some women

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care little or nothing for the niceties and embellishments of daily living; they are personally untidy, slovenly in their work, and disorder holds undisputed sway in their homes. Women in the home or in industry efficiently discharge a host of prosaic and uninspiring duties from which the beautiful is painfully absent. One can recall women who perceive the main element in a situation and attach due importance to it. The list of women who accurately report the qualities of inert objects of nature, although not staggeringly long, is not as short as some men suppose. Making allowances for the many cases which flatly contradict specific items in the preceding account of sex differences, the fact still remains unshaken that men and women, taking them by and large, display special interests and distinctive characteristics.

CO-OPERATION ON A NON-ROMANTIC BASIS

When men and women associate on a non-romantic basis they complement and enrich one another. Women contribute their observation and description of the details of a situation; the men who do analyze contribute their ability to lift into prominence the significant aspects of it. Only when all the constituent elements are taken into consideration do we have a proper understanding of anything as a whole. Women contribute their unreasoned conclusions; men their more impersonal approach to the many perplexing problems of daily living. The judgment of women, unless they are unduly influenced by jealousy, about people and social affairs is likely to be dependable; the inferences of men from the facts of the world of lifeless nature are probably more reliable. The sexes thus supple-

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ment each other. Women contribute their deep interest in the future and welfare of the human race, men their concern for the present and their ability to grapple with it: the attributes of both are essential to the enrichment of the sexes as well as to civilization and progress.

More men than women are the creators of highly artistic productions; more women than men appreciate the beautiful. The worth of many a lovely work of man or nature would be comparatively unrecognized if the deathless flame of artistic recognition did not burn in the heart of womankind. Men perform many unpleasant tasks which require the hard-headed method of disposition. Each contribution is necessary to a balanced social situation. Women can suggest projects which men by reason of their strength and aggressiveness can undertake and complete. By virtue of superior physical strength and aggressiveness men see things through to their finish. Often when a woman is overborne by insufficient bodily energy and falters, a man brings a project to a successful conclusion. And women still prefer masterful men who protect the weak, and fight for the right.

Men and women can thus accomplish what neither sex can do alone or do as well without the co-operation of the other. A man and a woman may supplement each other without developing the tender passion that leads to marriage. In fact, the unreturned love of one may disrupt the friendly joint effort which makes possible the attainment of a common objective. A mounting romantic emotion which is not reciprocated makes the separation of a man and a woman inevitable and ends the inspiring and mutually helpful comradeship.

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It behooves women to give serious consideration to their ability, yes their responsibility, to arouse the latent powers of the men with whom they associate. Women can inspire and influence men for good. It behooves men to appreciate women not only as possible sweethearts and wives, but also as companions, friends, and co-workers. It would be difficult to make an extended list of names of men who have made outstanding contributions to human well-being without a profound respect for and friendly relationships with gracious womanhood.

It is evident that what I have in mind is something far more creative than mere social intercourse between the sexes. In the South in our country, it is still customary for young men to call on young women on Sunday afternoons. A young woman may receive as many as twenty-five gentlemen in her home on a single afternoon. She gives to each a charming welcome, and every man feels complimented when he takes his departure. It is hoped that this beautiful custom will be continued indefinitely. It brings young men and women together in a relation the purpose of which is primarily social. It fosters the social amenities.

I repeat that what I have in mind is the fact that men and women in co-operation can accomplish many things which neither sex could do alone. Assisting and sustaining one another they form a team which has a combined strength and ability of its own. What the one sex lacks, the other supplies. Matters of mutual interest are discussed from both the man's and the woman's standpoint, and thereby both acquire more accurate conceptions of what is under consideration. A joint project may be undertaken, to which the woman brings her liking for details, her love

for the beautiful, her sympathetic understanding of people, and the man his broad grasp of essentials, his capacity for work, his courage and daring.

When a young man and woman launch and advance an enterprise in this spirit, neither is thinking of the other as a member of the other sex, of a possible romantic attachment, but of the end in view and of the means of achieving it by utilizing their united resources. When the goal set is the thing to which attention and effort are directed, the partnership moves on the non-romantic level.

The ancient Hebrews were oppressed by the Canaanites, the people who had previously been the possessors and masters of the land. The captain of the hosts of the king of Canaan had at his disposal superior military equipment. It seemed as if the Hebrews were doomed to extermination. Their priceless culture was gravely imperiled. Deborah, a Hebrew woman of political sagacity and undaunted courage, concluded that despite the tangible military odds against her people the hour had come when a concerted effort to deliver her countrymen from bondage, and their social customs from extinction, should be made. She was persuaded that if her people under adequate leadership took up arms the very stars in heaven would fight for them.

She imparted her vision to Barak, a competent organizer and leader of men. She herself was not able to muster an army, drill it, and give battle to the enemy; but she selected a man who was capable of military leadership and fired him with her enthusiasm. Inspired by Deborah, Barak assembled a host, trained it, and then despite relatively inferior material equipment attacked the army of

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the oppressors. The iron chariots on which the Canaanites relied for victory, and which the Hebrews contemplated with dread, were mired. A rainfall which was so heavy that the banks of a river overflowed and converted the battleground into a field of mud rendered the chariots worse than useless. The chariots, sunk in the mire, were traps in which Canaanites were caught. The Hebrews recovered their civic liberty and revived and preserved their social, moral, and religious practices.

What Barak would not have undertaken alone he was inspired to accomplish by the challenge and presence of Deborah. The woman supplied the man with a mission. The deliverance of the Hebrews would not have been wrought by the vision of the woman apart from the co-operation of the man. The achievement was a joint product.

It would be impossible to make a complete list of the worth-while things men and women can do together as comrades. One thinks at once of such recreations as winter sports, picnics, orchestra playing, play producing; of such serious projects as the betterment of the lot of the poor and ignorant, church work, civic reform, Americanization of foreigners, and the meeting of emergencies, like fire, flood, and drought. In every community there are unoccupied opportunities for young men and women in co-operation. Everywhere unutilized possibilities exist. After all, the strongest link which unites persons is that which is forged on the anvil of a shared task which demands of both men and women the best that they can command.

Young women can steady and encourage young men who are passing through a period of difficult transition.

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There are ways in which women can help men without marrying them. Many a man now in middle life can testify that he owes much to the young women who by their friendship, undiluted interest, understanding, and sheer goodness helped him during a critical stage of his youth. They granted him more than romantic love; they gave him vision, inspiration, and stability; they aroused in him the desire to improve himself, to develop his capacities for service, and to be clean in mind and body.

The lad who leaves home to go to college or to do gainful work is indeed fortunate if he is acquainted with high-minded girls with whom he may correspond without preliminary matrimonial intentions. The exchange of friendly letters will do them, as well as him, good. The encouragement and disinterested friendship which their letters breathe are the ties that bind him to the wholesome while he is adjusting himself to a new and strange situation. The assurance that they are influencing him brings out the best in the girls. The benefits are mutual. Multitudes of older men in all walks of life acknowledge with gratitude their obligations to women to whom they have never been romantically attracted.

SAFETY AND COMPANIONSHIP IN NUMBERS

In my opinion, comradeship between the sexes grows most naturally and bears its finest fruits when several men and women form a group for the realization of worthy aims. An association of people who are congenial acquires a spirit and quality of its own. In group activities and achievements the individual is stimulated and developed by others and, in turn, makes a contribution to his companions.

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Each man in the group associates with a number of women; and each woman is in contact with men of different gifts, tastes, and points of view. The sphere of influence of the individual is as wide as the group itself; and the benefits which accrue to each member are as diversified as the distinctive gifts and personalities of the others, and include the quality of the collective spirit.

If the group has been formed to undertake a worthy project, the goal naturally becomes the center of attention and absorbs the energies of the participating men and women. In such a social situation intimate mutual attractions and romantic attachments may or may not develop. If in the course of time the group has served its purpose and is disbanded, its one-time adherents will severally treasure the rich deposit of friendship and lasting inspiration which the comradeship of men and women has afforded.

The companionship of young men and women is not to be confused with platonic friendship. Strictly speaking, the platonic relationship in its historical sense, exists between a lad and a mature man. It is not a persistent friendly relationship between a man and a woman, a youth and a maiden. When the platonic relationship is cultivated, the man guides and instructs the boy, and the boy respects and trusts the man. The idealism and the enthusiasm of the boy inspire the man; the maturity and judgment of the man steady and develop the boy. Each makes a contribution to the other. The point stressed is that platonic friendship, according to its origin and early practice, is not a relationship between the sexes from which courtship and marriage are excluded, but a singularly

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deep and ennobling tie which binds a youth of promise and a man of experience and character.

A MAN'S MAN AND A WOMAN'S WOMAN

In this modern world a growing number of women in industry, business, and the professions want their men associates to take them for granted. They do not desire concessions from them because they belong to the opposite sex. They resent being reminded by the men with whom they work that they are women. They prefer to be judged by their own personal achievements. No preferential treatment is acceptable. Such women maintain that sex should have absolutely nothing to do with one's standing as a worker and with the opportunities for advancement and promotion. They rightly demand a non-sex rating and status which makes them the comrades and fellow-workers of men and not persons necessarily inferior and apart.

The companionship of men and women by no means takes the place of the association of the individual with persons of the same sex. In order to develop a wholesome personality a man must mingle freely with other men, for friendships between him and them are mutually gratifying. There are times when a real man wants the bracing and invigorating company of men only. Men have much in common which they periodically should share with others of their own kind. In order to develop gracious womanhood the maiden must form friendships with others of her own sex. Well-rounded manhood or womanhood depends in part on hearty and effective participation in the groups whose membership includes representatives of their respective sex only.

SENTIMENTALISM

The inability to find oneself and to participate heartily in the activities of and to be at home with persons of the same sex is an indication of a sad lack of normality. The man who relies entirely on women to provide him with inspiration and is ill at ease when in the company of men only is deficient in true manhood. He is a sentimentalist. He is likely to lack the robustness which the give and take with other men promotes. He may be uncomfortable because he feels inferior to other men and dreads comparison with them. His preference for the society of only women may be an unconscious desire to preserve his self-esteem. He needs the stimulation which association with other men provides, and he should have a contribution to make to members of his own sex.

The woman who must be surrounded by a bevy of men in order to be pleased, and who looks upon all other women as actual or possible rivals, is an undeveloped personality. She who deserts other women when any man heaves into sight and proceeds to brush an imaginary fleck of lint from the lapel of his coat is a flirt or coquette. She is likely to be as obnoxious to men as to other women. The wholesome individual associates with persons of both sexes, and is liked by both men and women. Such an individual develops balanced personality.

The young man who cannot come into contact with a maiden without being moved by romantic sentiments, without either cultivating a love relationship or ignoring her entirely, does not appreciate, or wilfully disregards, the value of friendship between the sexes. The young woman who lacks an interest in a man of character, promise of usefulness, or proved ability who does not pay her ro-

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mantic attentions, leads a restricted, cramped, and limited life. It is regrettable that in our modern society so many individuals are absorbed in the romantic. The men of this stripe look at women through colored glasses and hence do not see them as they really are, and furthermore seemingly do not appreciate what they themselves are sacrificing. It is all well and good for a man to be a plumed knight, rescuing a maiden who sinks into his manly arms as his fiancée; but he will be a more intelligent deliverer and a more companionable husband if he has previously associated with her and other young women on a non-romantic basis in an enterprise which has enriched all.

CHAPTER X

MISALLIANCE

THE number of divorces which are granted by the courts of our country each year is shocking. The proportion of divorces to marriages occasions anxiety among those who have the welfare of our people at heart. Among the many reasons assigned for the collapse of domestic relations, the following, which may vary in importance and degree of validity, are included: loss of mutual respect and affection, difference in religious and cultural background, the increasing financial independence of woman, temperamental incompatibility, the artificial life led in the city, want of education for home and family responsibilities, and sexual conflicts.

That several of these causes of marital friction can be eliminated by couples with the determination and intelligence to make marriage not merely tolerable but actually satisfying, nobody who is an observer of the modern scene will be disposed to deny. Furthermore, it is common knowledge that divorce and remarriage do not always produce the happiness which is desired and anticipated. Those who marry more or less at random, and when disappointed

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divorce their spouses, may not secure mates who are more satisfactory than those discarded.

In a study of the mismated, one must add to those who seek relief in the divorce courts those who patiently or sullenly and rebelliously endure the bondage of an unhappy marriage. Multitudes who are mismated never sue for divorce; for they are restrained by such considerations as poverty, young children, the disapproval of friends, and religious scruples. In some circles divorce with remarriage occurs without severe penalty and with alarming frequency; in other circles it is prohibited save at too great a sacrifice to be borne.

It should be transparently clear at the outset of this discussion that there is no solution for every marital problem. Life being what it is, certain circumstances being uncontrollable, and the dictates of the class of which many are members being inexorable, a multitude of couples are caught in a trap from which they cannot extricate themselves. Not to bear their marital trials is simply to bring upon themselves worse disasters. It is folly to presume that there is a specific cure for every domestic ill. When husband and wife have been driven apart emotionally by conditions that cannot be eradicated, and a legal separation or a divorce is either inexpedient or unobtainable, marriage must be endured until death claims one partner.

WHY MARRY?

What may married persons legitimately expect of each other? The answer to this question may disclose why so many couples are mismated and suggest how some of them may improve or transform their situation. Under ordinary

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circumstances, wives have a right to children, financial support, and companionship. Surely as the home-builder the wife is entitled to these three fundamentals. On the other hand, husbands are entitled to children, a well-conducted home, and comradeship. When a husband is denied or deprived of one of these normal rights, domestic tension may be induced and may imperil if not wreck the marriage.

Normal husbands and wives desire children. In the divorce courts fathers fight as fiercely and persistently as mothers for the possession of the children. The paternal impulse is strong. Both men and women should bear in mind that the primary objective of marriage is the reproduction of the race. The fact that too many children or too few or none at all contributes to domestic infelicity is common knowledge. Parenthood, mutually and intelligently planned, should displace the haphazard bringing of children into the world. In some homes there are too many children and in others too few.

The health of the mother is a far more primary consideration in determining the number of children and the spacing of their advent than the financial ability of the father to provide them a good living, luxuries, and a higher education. Some parents are disposed to do too much for their children and to let their means supply what they deem superior advantages fix the number of children that they have. One wise couple with a modest income has reared a large family of children. When each of the several sons reached his majority, the father calmly told him to make his own way in the world, not to look to his parents for financial aid or an inherited estate, since they proposed to spend in their later years what they had ac-

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cumulated in their prime. This father did not propose to make life a bed of roses for the children at the cost of a smaller family.

On the other hand, speaking paradoxically, thousands of children, for one reason or another that we need not specify, had a right not to be born, a right which their parents either ignorantly or wilfully disregarded. Such offspring add to the burdens of their parents and the community, and are in many cases doomed to a miserable existence. Even if they can foster desirable qualities in their parents and serve as an outlet for the parental impulse, a wrong is done when they are given life. For example, syphilis can be transmitted from one generation to another with devastating results; and if either the wife or the husband is afflicted with this form of venereal disease, a child should not be made the innocent victim. Let such a couple, of which the one or both are still in the infectious stage of an inheritable disease, adopt children if they are able to give them a home.

RELUCTANT MOTHERHOOD

Many good men with comfortable incomes are incensed because their wives refuse to bear children or a reasonable number of them, despite the fact that they are physically able to assume motherhood repeatedly and might well make of it a career. The reasons why women in privileged homes shirk motherhood are patently unsound and indicate a lack of appreciation of what children can contribute to the stability and lasting happiness of marriage, and what intelligent parenthood can add to the welfare of society.

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The following three reasons for not bearing children, or not more than one or two, are most frequently given by wives of this station, many of whom are college graduates. In the first place, they declare that the bearing and rearing of children is a nuisance. Children consume too much time and energy. They interfere with a woman's freedom and with her social life. In the next place, children are expensive. It costs money to feed, clothe, and educate them. Too many wives prefer to spend the money which children would cost on personal luxuries. A child or more children would reduce the number of new gowns the wife can now buy, the theater parties she can give and attend, the cruises to foreign parts she can take. Finally, motherhood disrupts the careers of wives who are business or professional women. Many wives refuse to let babies interfere even for brief times with their vocational activities, lest their constituencies drift away and financial loss be incurred.

What price comfort, ease, soft living, and an outside career! The qualities of sacrifice, frugality, and tenderness which children engender in parents who lead normal lives, and the satisfactions which well-reared children afford fathers and mothers, are ruthlessly held in contempt. The discipline and the rewards of parenthood would reconstruct many a marriage which, if permitted to run its present course, will be blasted.

Childless and sterile married people who bemoan the absence of children in the home ignore an unutilized opportunity. They should be counseled that no couple need be deprived of the boon of children so long as children are available for adoption and the childless can com-

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ply with the ordinary requirements of foster parenthood. No couple able to supply the essentials of homelife should remain childless just because they have not or cannot or should not bring children of their own into the world. Organizations exist for the sole purpose of finding suitable homes for children who have been orphaned or otherwise separated from their parents. A physician, a local social worker, or a pastor who is in close touch with his following may be able to serve as mediator between a childless couple and an unmarried mother or those in charge of a baby bereft of parents.

There are certain advantages in acquiring children by adoption. When one proposes to adopt a child, and can meet the standards of an institution seeking foster parents for dependent homeless children, one can make a choice among available charges. When a child is born into a home, the parents must take what nature has given them as regards sex, intelligence, and bodily equipment. There is no alternative. By resorting to the orphanage or foundling's home or retreat for unmarried mothers, if the demands are reasonable, one can get what one wants—a boy or a girl, a young child mentally tested and hygienically certified, a blonde or a brunette. What more can one ask? One should adopt a mere infant in arms if possible, and a child a few years old only when it is known with certainty that he has been born into a good home and been influenced for good. If this advice is disregarded a child who will bring only heaviness of heart to his foster parents may be adopted.

Childless couples should cease to lament their case and adopt a few children and learn what real family life

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implies. Adopted children will do more for foster parents than such couples can do for the children to whom they have given a home. It is an error to suppose that couples cannot dearly love adopted children. Whether they can love them as deeply as they could their own flesh and blood is a controversial question, the pros and cons of which we need not investigate. It is sufficient to stress that one loves that in which one invests oneself; and the more intelligently foster parents guide the development of children and the greater the necessary sacrifices they are called upon to make for them, the more such husbands and wives will cherish one another, and the more they will become attached to those who are theirs by the free act of adoption. Many are mismated because no children have been adopted, because no children have united them, afforded an outlet for the maternal and paternal impulse, made them unselfish, and given them an interest other than their own personal concerns.

CAN HUSBANDS UNDERSTAND THEIR WIVES?

Mismated partners lack companionship. Comradeship is founded on a number of positive factors. The first is mutual sympathetic understanding. Is it possible for husbands to understand the personalities of their wives? Is a man qualified to appreciate the woman's point of view? Is a wife's mental endowment, her way of thinking, her emotional experiences, her distinctive abilities and preferences, so complicated and unique that her husband lives in an altogether different world? One of the fallacies which men are prone to cherish without hesitancy is that no man can fathom the mind of a woman. It is often alleged that the

most brilliant man is incapable of understanding even the woman of ordinary mentality. Tradition has invested woman with an aura of mystery which no man is supposed to be intelligent enough to penetrate. Most husbands blandly take it for granted that they are by nature so different mentally from their wives that to attempt to comprehend the subtleties of the feminine mind would be a sin of presumption. One is inclined to believe that women as a class have given the false assumption their active support.

On the other hand, nobody supposes that a wife cannot comprehend the workings of her husband's mind. In fact, it is generally assumed that by an active native competency and without exerting herself she reads his mind, knows his points of strength and weakness, and adroitly influences him without his knowledge and concurrence. Now in the time when woman was almost wholly dependent upon marriage for a living and a career, it was necessary for her to study the nature of men. She was forced by circumstances to acquire an intimate knowledge of the masculine mind and to take full advantage of her insights. Her bread and shelter and clothing and her standing in the community—in short, her economic security and social prestige—hinged upon the type of man she married. If the relation of dependence had been reversed, if men had been dependent on women for temporal support and social status, they would have been compelled to make a special study of the feminine mind and to be guided by the findings. No doubt women would have endowed men with a fictitious mental superiority. In fact, a number of men who, in these days when so many women are gainfully

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employed, are receiving financial aid and social advantages from their wives, are rapidly learning to comprehend them and to make a favorable adjustment to their spouses.

To be sure, mental differences between men and women persist. Although they have much in common, each sex has several distinctive characteristics. That fact does not necessarily imply that one sex is too mysterious to be understood and appreciated by the other. The foundation of companionship is mutual understanding. The husband can discern and interpret the impulses, the desires, the tastes, the warm emotional nature, and the point of view of his wife, if only he will take the pains to be a patient learner. She, in turn, is capable of acquiring dependable knowledge of his disposition, preferences, failings, excellencies, and general conception of life and its meaning. Only when they sympathetically interpret each other are mutual consideration, stimulation and inspiration possible. Congenial mates know and respect each other's insights and outlook. The mismated have no comradeship, but are bored to weariness, if not desperation, by each other. They may live under the same roof, eat at the same table, and be the parents of the same children, but lack a sound basis for a relationship of satisfying intimacy.

Not that the correct understanding of a husband by a wife and vice versa inevitably promotes conjugal felicity. A wife's comprehension of her husband's motives, habits, and tastes may disgust her. In such a case, knowledge separates rather than unites spouses. It is not being misunderstood, but being understood in detail which produces domestic friction when a mate is guilty of serious misdemeanors which he or she refuses to confess and discontinue.

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When a husband openly alleges that he is misunderstood, that his sensitive spirit has been crushed by lack of appreciation in the home, and therefore furtively seeks consolation in the society of another woman, the probability is that in reality he is plainly understood by his neglected wife. A wife who bitterly complains that her husband, who is actually preoccupied by business worries and is doing his utmost to support his family decently, is a melancholy failure as a lover and as a gratifier of her cultural needs, and therefore requires the companionship of another man, may or may not be found out by her spouse and held to accountability.

AFTER THE HONEYMOON, WHAT?

Health is also an ingredient in companionship. If chronic illness exists, if either husband or wife is a hopeless invalid, the domestic tie is subjected to a severe strain. Normal relationships are impossible, no matter how much husband and wife may love each other. The invalid may be the object of tender care but ceases to be a companion who shares the activities of the other and participates in the many affairs which constitute the sum of domestic life. The well spouse is restricted by the invalid. Although permanent physical illness is no moral ground for divorce, it is a serious handicap to a happy marriage, especially if the healthy partner is young and filled with a zest for life. Although insanity for a stated number of years may be recognized by the state as legal justification for the dissolution of the union and remarriage, the mentally sound partner may be restrained by qualms of conscience or the disapproval of his social circle. To marry

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a chronic invalid is of course sheer folly; it is to let the heat of passion triumph over reason, and to precipitate an abnormal marriage relation.

A difficult adjustment must be made if marriage is to be successful. If it is not made, marriage, unless disrupted by desertion, legal separation, or divorce, becomes a continuous irritation to both partners. The white heat of the honeymoon must be transmuted into the warm and steady glow of affection. Passion must be dissolved into companionship if the ship of marriage is to be kept on an even keel. The contentment of mutual trust, the enjoyment of each other's presence, respect for each other's opinions and tastes, knowledge and frank recognition of each other's peculiarities, failings, and faults, and confidence that in a crisis the one will support the other are ingredients in the comradeship which supplants the intense romantic emotion marking courtship and the early months of marriage. In fact, it is humanly impossible indefinitely to maintain the emotional fervor of courtship and the honeymoon. Unless companionship with all that it implies is deliberately cultivated, a sense of defeat and futility will be kindled. In many cases mutual hatred is engendered when the fire of early love has been extinguished and the tenderness of married fellowship has not been developed.

The transition from the ardor of love to the deeper and enduring affection of companionship is usually made in the second year of marriage, if it occurs at all. If it is not made during the first few years of married life, it is seldom successfully made at a much later period. It is rarely necessary before the second year and is only rarely accom-

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plished after a protracted delay. The crisis in the conjugal relation generally emerges about the close of the second year. If the first few years of marriage are successfully weathered, if the fiery emotion of romantic love has been converted into the quieter relation of affectionate companionship, neither partner will feel mismated. Unless the transformation is consciously and intelligently undertaken and consummated, a tragedy will be born of the cooling of the all-consuming attraction which led to marriage. The process is not an accidental incident, but a mutual achievement of an intelligent and devoted couple. If comradeship is disregarded or is not promoted, the husband is likely to be cold and neglectful and the wife faultfinding and resentful.

WHO SHOULD RULE?

Co-operation is another important component of the companionship which should flourish between husband and wife. They should not be competitors but partners in the project of home-building. It is not necessary or desirable, as will be directly explained, that they be co-equals in all the various areas of the domestic enterprise. Statistics show that if either must dominate, it should be the husband and not the wife. The control of the domestic life by the husband is more likely to result in happiness, because he has by nature in most cases a more dominant personality and more often has the economic advantage. Furthermore, many women admire a forceful man and are content to accept his leadership and protection. Women, as a rule, despise a weak man, one whom they can bend to their wills by the sheer power of a more compelling personality.

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It has been ascertained that if the wife dominates her husband and takes charge of the household, domestic infelicity is more likely to be the consequence. He will be known as her adjunct, and their acquaintances and friends as well as she herself will lose whatever respect they may have previously had for him as a man. He may weakly and meekly acquiesce or nurse morose resentment. Mismatching is less likely to occur when marriage is a co-operative undertaking, when neither spouse gains the ascendancy over the other and assumes the management of most if not all the details which affect both.

Co-operation is not, as many erroneously suppose, the sharing of every problem that arises in home-building and in the work of the husband. Newly married couples in still too great numbers harbor the delusion that co-operation consists in discussing each item of the domestic relation until a joint decision is reached. This procedure results in unending argument and debate over all sorts of inconsequential as well as significant things. Differences of opinion will often arise; and unless the one partner yields to the other, no action is taken and a condition of smoldering antagonism in both may be created. In fact, failure to agree may produce open friction and strife.

A more excellent way is open. A division of responsibilities can be made. The husband may be accountable for certain interests of family life, such as the manner and place of earning the necessary income, and the wife be responsible for such particulars as the buying of most of the household commodities and the care of the little children. Each should have the last and determining word

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in his or her respective agreed realm. Each may consult the other without surrender of the individual power of decision. It is, of course, most expedient that they be in full accord as to such an important project as the purchasing of a home; but even in such a major undertaking she may decide which type of house is best suited to the needs of the family, and he may determine the amount of money which, in the light of his financial ability, should be invested in a home.

When husband and wife insist on discussing in fine detail every factor of mutual concern for the purpose of coming to a common conclusion, they are likely to convert themselves into a debating society and to become mismatched. A contributing factor to marital unhappiness is lack of co-operation in home-making in terms of a division of spheres of responsibilities. The fact that everything that has a bearing upon the quality of the domestic situation is a joint interest does not invalidate the principle of individual accountability for the good of the household as a whole.

Companionship at its best implies respect for individuality, or the sum of the respective characteristic traits of the husband and wife. If the marriage relation represses or exterminates the individuality of either, domestic infelicity will ensue, unless the one is tamely submissive to the other. In a normal domestic situation each partner contributes to the development of the personality of the other. Marriage should be conducive to the expression of the gifts and abilities of men and women. Neither partner should consciously or unwittingly swallow, digest, and assimilate the other to the point of the extinction of the par-

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ticular qualities which together constitute wholesome individuality. The stronger or more aggressive should not consume the weaker or more compliant; the lamb should not be compelled to lie down within the lion.

When the statement is made that an aged couple who have been living together in the bonds of matrimony for half a century have identical tastes, opinions, and preferences, one should not infer that their marriage has necessarily on that account been successful. The identities may be the natural products of the suppression of the personality of a meek spouse through the imposition of the will of a domineering husband or wife. Nothing could be more pathetically tragic and contrary to the true purpose of matrimony than the gradual deterioration of the individuality of either.

An excellent indication of the quality of marital companionship is the extent to which the partnership has contributed to the self-realization of both husband and wife as persons. It is not necessary that they be of one mind in all things. It is not essential that they have the same talents and likes and aversions. If a wife is a lover of music and the husband is all but tone-deaf, he will encourage her to cultivate her musical gift, when the bonds of intelligent devotion unite the two. If he likes to camp and fish and hunt and she prefers the comforts of the home, she will not pout and nag and complain when the urge to go on an outdoor expedition with his cronies is felt. The one will sacredly respect the personal desires of the other, and each will repose confidence in the integrity of the other as a person with rights and privileges of his own.

The conjugal relation is admittedly difficult to main-

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tain on a basis which is satisfactory to the two most vitally and intimately concerned. Husbands and wives, living under the same roof and seeing one another day after day, are subjected to severe tests. They see each other, not only when they are at their individual best, but also when they are at their worst. The worst must not be permitted to obscure the best. It is, therefore, all the more important that every effort be put forth not to destroy the initiative, originality, and creativity which each possesses.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Many husbands who are neat in their habits of dress and systematic in their personal and occupational affairs are irked by dowdy, untidy, and slovenly housewives. The wife is the center of the home. As a rule, the husband expects his wife to keep house neatly and efficiently. One man told me bluntly that a husband has a right to expect his wife to darn his socks. I suppose that the darning of socks symbolized for him orderly housekeeping. Most men like a well-kept home, although the majority resent living in a house where one may not be comfortable. Slipshod housekeeping, with its disarray and poorly cooked and indifferently served meals, is an evil which is responsible for considerable mismating. Housekeeping which is so meticulous and tyrannical that a man is literally afraid to sit in a chair lest he disarrange something and arouse the ire of his spouse is another extreme to be shunned. The bread-winner deserves a home which is at once a haven of rest and a well-regulated institution. Many a man is mismated because his wife is a failure as a home-maker.

It so happens that wives expend most of the income of

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their husbands. Shopkeepers and advertisers know this fact and exploit its possibilities for the sale of goods and the making of profit. Women buy most of the socks, collars, neckties, shirts, suspenders, and handkerchiefs which men wear. When a man, accompanied by a woman, goes to a clothing shop in order to buy a suit of clothes, the alert salesman regards him merely as a sort of dummy the purpose of which is for the time being served when the size of the suit has been determined. The salesman, if he is alert, addresses his remarks to her, calling her attention to the merits of the garments he is trying to sell. When he has sold her the suit the dummy may come to life and pay the bill. Fortunate is the husband whose wife is a good business manager. Many a man testifies that he has been able to lay aside a penny against the proverbial rainy day because he has a thrifty wife. Few men can earn as much as a woman who is resolutely reckless in money matters can spend.

Some families, to be sure, are sorely and even tragically handicapped by insufficient incomes, incomes with which not even the ingenuity of a frugal wife can make ends meet. Other families are hampered by the injudicious and wasteful expenditure of an income which is actually adequate. The role which the wife plays as the buyer of most of the goods which the family requires has a positive bearing upon the quality of the matrimonial alliance. A spendthrift or financially inefficient wife is the frequent cause of domestic upheaval.

Several students of American families declare that their findings show that disputes over money matters are more often the cause of domestic dissension than sexual incom-

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patibility. The fact must not be overlooked that many wives are rendered miserable by the stinginess of their husbands. Some men dole out a pitiful allowance to their wives and expect them to perform miracles of purchasing. Niggardliness is contemptible. When a husband presumes that a nickel grudgingly bestowed upon his wife should do the service of which only a dollar is capable, he is laying the foundations for a matrimonial inferno of his own creation. A browbeaten wife in whose bosom a sense of injustice is burning is an uninspiring companion and unless sadly depressed may retaliate. The husband's miserly, covetous, and grasping disposition turns on itself and destroys the home.

THE ROCK OF INCOMPATIBILITY

Sexual conflicts occasion many domestic tragedies. Among the causes of frigidity among wives the following are numbered: fear of pregnancy, religious scruples, loss of physical vitality, faulty sexual technique, and lack of affection for the husband. Several of these causes account for impotency in men. Sexuality is not the most important ingredient in a satisfactory marriage, but it does make a significant emotional contribution. Many a couple at sword's points could live together in peace if through intelligent study and judicious practice they learned to lead sane sex lives. To minimize the place of sexuality in marriage is about as stupid and perilous as to magnify it to the exclusion of the other factors of family life. After all, men and women, representatives of the two sexes, marry; and unless they come to terms with the sex factor in their relations mismating to a considerable degree is bound to exist.

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To be mismated is to suffer a tragedy. The status of the mismated affects the victim adversely. He suffers mental torture; his predicament hampers him as a worker. He lacks the support and comradeship of his spouse. In his life a void exists which only an understanding and loyal woman can fill. He is an incomplete and unhappy person. Not that men have not risen above unfortunate marriages without recourse to desertion or legal separation or divorce. These hardy and courageous men have found compensation for matrimonial infelicity in their work, in their friendships with men, in sports and hobbies, and in a point of view which absorbs the disappointment. They have learned to make the best of an unfortunate situation which they cannot remedy.

An unhappy marriage is especially difficult for a woman to endure. The wife is more dependent on the home and conjugal conditions than the husband. If the matrimonial alliance is a failure, the woman's world collapses. The opportunities to find satisfactions in other things are fewer in number in her case. She may find comfort in her children and a measure of happiness in her friends, but for a good husband there is no adequate substitute. Like the mismated man, she may reorder her life, bravely bear her cross, and derive considerable contentment from going about and doing good.

A successful marriage is not a gift of the gods nor an accident, but the accomplishment of a husband and wife who live together in accordance with a workable plan. Children, mutual affection, kindly tolerance of each other's weaknesses, a division of domestic responsibilities, respect for each other's opinions and personal gifts, effective house-

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keeping, wise expenditure of income, sexual compatibility are ingredients of the normal marriage. A happy marriage is the triumph of common sense over egotism, stupidity, and arrogance. Premarital mutual understanding will not kill love; on the contrary, it may prevent later disillusionment and dissension. An acquaintance with only three or four eligible partners is insufficient. The young person should cultivate fellowship with at least twenty possible candidates for marriage, in order that he may make a selection guided by intelligence before romantic love sways him.

Adherents of the same religious faith and members of the same race are more likely to be congenial than persons who differ in race and religious outlook. A successful marriage is a difficult accomplishment under favorable circumstances and should not be made more complicated by religious and racial divergencies. These obstacles to normal married life should be carefully weighed by young people contemplating matrimony, before the impractical idealism of youth, coupled with the ardor of love, blinds them to realities. Protestants do well to marry Protestants; the same sound principle applies to those of other faiths. The religious should not be yoked with unbelievers. Members of white, yellow, and black races should not intermarry unless they are willing to endure prejudice and to inflict problems upon their children. Couples are under sacred obligation to consider not only their own future marital welfare, but also the fate of any children who may be born to them. It is safer to marry a person of one's own race, religion, and background. It is advisable to choose a mate neither much older nor younger than oneself. It is better

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to be reasonably similar in mental ability and physical energy, lest the one become a drag on the other.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE HUMAN

Perfection in all particulars is incarnate in neither man nor woman. Once the honeymoon with its glamour is past, the frailties and faults of each are revealed. The wife discovers the defects of the qualities she adored in the man who wooed and won her heart. She will shortly become aware that his disposition and occupation entail limitations to which she must adjust herself if her marriage to him is to endure until death intervenes.

The wise wife knows that unless she can find fairly satisfactory substitutes for the preoccupations and active inclinations which divert a large portion of her husband's time and interest, she will become a chronic faultfinder and thus alienate him or lead a lonely and colorless existence. Of course, wives may have peculiarities, careers, and tastes which irk their mates, and deprive them of the companionship and intimacy which they desire. Husbands must accommodate themselves to domestic problems or endure the disappointments and risk the moral hazards of an uncongenial union.

When domestic friction persists it may be advisable for husband and wife to separate long enough to give each sufficient time to analyze the situation and to formulate a promising solution if the case is not hopeless. To be sure, the temporary separation is not what is popularly known as an emotional vacation, a straying from the path of moral rectitude to illicit involvements. It may be expedient for the husband to take a holiday with male friends, but if he

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pursues this course he should reserve sufficient time for reflection in solitude. Merely to leave the wife for a season and to engage in recreation with congenial companions will, of course, give him a respite; but accommodation to the domestic tragedy will not be furthered. Similarly, the unhappy wife may escape from the home situation by visiting her relatives or friends; but unless she addresses herself to her disappointment, the relief will be temporary.

When one has withdrawn from marital vexations, the distorted perspective is corrected; the various elements in the total situation are clearly discerned, and each is given its true value. The conclusion may emerge that a storm in a teapot is raging, a tempest which a sense of proportion and humor may calm. Seen as they really are, the causes for the domestic rift may be trivial and can be removed with tactful ingenuity, or borne with a little patience. A brief separation of couples who, being emotionally inflamed, have considered their marriage an inferno, often leads to better mutual understanding and to a satisfactory reconstitution of their relationships.

CHAPTER XI

SICKNESS

MULTITUDES literally enjoy poor health; they actually derive pleasure from being just sick enough to receive the attention they desire; but the majority of people prefer to be healthy, and find illness irksome. The burden of being sick and confined to one's room is hardest to bear by those persons who have diversified interests and are absorbed in personally satisfying and socially useful work. Sickness is not an unrelieved disadvantage, a cross without a crown, a night that is not scattered by dawn. Let us list a few typical disadvantages and contrast them with the compensating advantages, and refer to several of the things that a sick person may do to make his lot not only tolerable but really a victory over disability.

THE PROBLEM OF PAIN

To begin with, many illnesses, especially in their early stages, involve physical suffering. Pain is hard to endure, but nobody in his right mind would submit to any treatment which would render him absolutely free from it for the rest of his life. No intelligent person would con-

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sent to an injection of a serum into his body which would permanently relieve him of physical suffering; for such a condition, if it could be created, would doubtless shorten the individual's life. We know that pain is a danger signal which nature produces in order to call attention to a bodily disorder. A toothache means that we need dental attention; a headache may originate in one of at least a hundred bodily disturbances; a crushing sensation in the heart with shooting pains in the left arm is nature's way of serving emphatic notice that one's heart is in need of a doctor's care; a sharp pain between the stomach and the right hip may signify that the appendix is affected and should be surgically removed. In many cases pain is not an enemy, but a friend who issues a warning that should be heeded.

Thanks to miracles of modern medicine, the pain of a host of disorders can be banished through the elimination of their causes, or be mercifully drugged if the producing factors cannot be overcome. Often it is the mental anguish which sickness induces that is harder to subdue than the bodily suffering experienced. To be sure, in a few cases physicians consider it unwise or impossible to relieve physical pain altogether or even in part. Pain is not easy to bear, and constitutes a challenge to courage, patience, and endurance. Modern man seems to find it more difficult than his ancestors to submit with fortitude to bodily suffering.

THE HIGH COST OF ILLNESS

Sickness is expensive. The cost of the doctor's services, medicine, nursing, and hospitalization is not an in-

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significant item for people with modest incomes. To the direct cost of the means of restoring health should be added the loss in wages or salary which temporary inability to work gainfully entails. In some instances prolonged illness results in the loss of one's job or position, which makes an occupational adjustment after convalescence necessary. Not infrequently it is difficult for the individual to find suitable employment.

The cost of sickness is particularly burdensome for the middle classes of our population. The poor, the financially submerged, the underprivileged, may go to the free medical clinics established and maintained for their special benefit. Such persons are unembarrassed when they take advantage of such provisions. They receive the attention of the leading medical specialists in the community, who contribute their services to free clinics without charge. On the other hand, the rich can afford to utilize all that medical science can command. Although the rich cannot indefinitely postpone death, they can employ all means at the disposal of modern medicine regardless of the cost. Many a man has recovered from a dangerous illness because he had funds with which to pay for costly but beneficial medical attention.

The persons whose earnings are slender, who are able to make ends meet but not much more, are the ones who find the cost of medical care a financial hardship. They do not feel that they should appeal for care to the free clinics conducted for those who are destitute and in actual want. They need medical treatment which, despite intelligent efforts to economize without undue health risks, is beyond their means. Money is borrowed on life insur-

ance policies, and debts which must be paid in due time are contracted.

To occupy a private room in a hospital together with the services of one's personal physician or surgeon is expensive. This is the case not because hospitals are profit-making institutions and physicians as a class amass huge fortunes through the practice of their profession. The vast majority of hospitals could not be maintained without income from invested funds or the free gifts of benevolent people of means. Relatively few physicians acquire riches; in fact, the best of them contribute their services to the poor with a generosity which is unequaled by the members of most other professions. The high cost of the occupancy of the private hospital room with the medical care of the personal doctor is unavoidable.

A more economical method is commending itself to a growing number of persons of the middle classes. They are entering hospitals as ward patients. They are overcoming their prejudices and dislikes of the hospital wards. As a rule the physicians and surgeons on a hospital staff, working in shifts, render their services without financial compensation to the ward patients. The cost of being a patient in a ward is considerably less than half that of occupying a private room and being under the care of one's own physician. The total cost is even proportionately less if a surgical operation is performed.

The number of beds in a ward varies with the size of the ward and facilities of the hospital. To be sure, persons of various races, different backgrounds, and diversity of ailments occupy the beds of a given ward in the modern hospital. People of culture with small incomes who have

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been ward patients bear testimony to advantages other than financial. Here the intelligent observer becomes acquainted with persons with whom he does not ordinarily associate in the days of health. The chief thing that is sacrificed is complete privacy; but this is offset by a unique opportunity to study human nature, once the patient is recovering and able to appreciate his surroundings. The varieties of human beings one encounters in a ward would provide an abundance of excellent material for a novel or play, entitled perhaps "Aches and Pains." One intelligent woman in a ward, the wife of a teacher, recorded in a notebook the clever and odd remarks of her fellow-patients. The written record is now a highly prized possession. Another found in a foreigner occupying the bed next to hers a woman of charm and originality, and the friendship which developed between them was continued and cultivated after both had been discharged from the hospital.

Many people have become members of associations conducted by hospitals or other responsible agencies, the purpose of which is to supply medical care in the home or a hospital, as may be most expedient, for a stated number of weeks. The dues are not burdensome and within the means of families with modest incomes. It has often been asserted that people do not make financial provision for possible illness. It is evident that the middle classes have at last become aware of the wisdom of anticipating sickness and unemployment and of preparing for such and other emergencies.

PERILS OF DEPENDENCE

Again, the sick person, especially if the illness is pro-

tracted, is inclined to form habits of dependence. These habits may be quite unintentionally fostered by the patient's doctor, nurse, and friends. Self-reliance is often permanently impaired.

One thinks first of all of an addiction to drugs of all sorts. Once more on his feet, at work and cured of the ailment which for a time kept him in bed as a patient, a person may be actively prone to use drugs for almost any form of indisposition which may overtake him. A chest is filled with a strange assortment of medicines. A man's pockets or a woman's handbag may contain remedies for a vast array of human ills. To diagnose one's own ailments and to prescribe for them is hazardous. Widely advertised nostrums, patent medicines, sure cures for almost all the bodily ills to which human beings are subject are being bought by an astonishingly large number of persons for whom drugs were once scientifically prescribed by a competent physician. To be independent of drugs selected for real or imaginary disorders is of the utmost importance to the health of both body and mind. The wise man weans himself from the taking of drugs which have not been recommended by a skilled physician, as soon as he realizes that he is in danger of becoming an addict.

Dependence manifests itself in other more or less deplorable forms. A patient may receive financial help to tide him over the period of unproductiveness and additional expense. He may sense in the generosity of others an opportunity to shift further responsibility from himself to them. He may persuade himself that because he has been afflicted by sickness he is justified in expecting or even demanding others to continue their financial aid.

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He may endeavor to become a chronic invalid in order to receive further financial support from those who are susceptible to his appeals. Now and then one meets a person who as a patient learned how to take advantage of the sympathy and liberality of the kindly disposed whose means were barely sufficient for their own needs. Many a person who has recovered from an illness should be financially emancipated by his temporary benefactors.

Closely allied with financial dependence is the desire for the continuance of the personal attentions which a patient receives. The sick man is humored, is waited on, is catered to, is treated with the deference accorded a person who is in a class by himself. Friends inquire solicitously into his state and send him fruit and flowers and dainties. He is showered with attentions to which he was a total stranger in the days of health. He may find these favors so congenial and agreeable that to have to forgo them would be a deprivation. He may resolve to exact as many of them as possible from more or less tractable people such as his associates who are under obligations to him, and his wife and children. Obviously, it is their bounden duty by any means to discourage the childish expectations and mandates.

In many cases, dependence is more mental or inward. Sickness generally weakens the power of mental self-discipline. The patient may become discouraged by the current affliction and by the seeming lack of bright prospects. He may hark backward for consolation. In fact, sick people are likely to recall and revel in the scenes of their childhood, to find solace in the memory of parents, perhaps dead for years. Past achievements are glorified and re-enacted in

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imagination. The present with its banishment from the ordinary affairs of life is so unsatisfying and gloomy that the patient clings to the past, which recollection tends to paint in rosy colors. A certain amount of reverie, day-dreaming, and glorying in the past can do the patient no harm and may even provide a sustaining measure of comfort, if the attitude is dissolved as soon as he recovers. The gilded past must not become a substitute for future planning, work, the resumption of the usual responsibilities.

MORBIDITY AND CONFUSION

The patient may become morbid-minded. He may be occupied with himself and his symptoms to such an extent that anxiety actually retards recovery. Fear of permanent invalidism and extreme discouragement defer convalescence. That a patient should take something more than a superficial interest in his condition is natural and to be expected. It is quite another thing to be so concerned with an ailment and the possible outcome of it that hopelessness and worry let disease take a firmer hold and impair the forces which make for health. The wholesome mental attitude of the patient may be the pivotal factor in his recovery.

The mental powers of the sick are for the time being reduced in vigor and reliability. One recalls the patient who, after trying to read and comprehend Browning's poems, in desperation called his wife into the sickroom. Thrusting the volume into her hands he asked her to read and then to explain one of Browning's poems. She dutifully read the words but honestly confessed that she did not understand what the author intended to convey. "Thank

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God," he sighed, "I thought I had lost my mind." The functions of the mind are weakened by severe bodily illness, and this fact should be known and taken into account by the patient.

One patient, ignorant of this common result of a bodily ailment, was frightened by his inability to compose an ordinary letter of friendship. A word from an understanding nurse or a thoughtful doctor would have relieved him of his mental torture at once. Memory is likely to be unreliable, the ability to think clearly suspended temporarily; and decisions made by the extremely sick should not be regarded as final and necessarily sound. The mental functions become stronger and more dependable as the bodily energies are renewed and health is restored.

Finally, the sick may become disheartened, skeptical about the essential goodness of the world, and generally overcritical and cynical. The milk of human kindness may sour in the bosom of the patient. His fear of a lingering, painful illness and of death may make him desperate. In his frantic despondency he may either assume an attitude of hopelessness charged with bitterness, or resort to quacks who promise miraculous cures. Many a sick man in his perplexity has lost faith in the competency of his physician and fallen into the grasping hands of the pretender of medical skill. Recovery has been retarded, if not actually halted, by such an unwise and rash change.

The mood of anxiety may make the sick man susceptible to religious vagaries which arouse hope of a speedy and complete recovery. He may fall victim to a succession of religious precepts and practices which are specious and dangerous. Expectations without foundations leave the

convert in the lurch. Worry and no apparent progress on the road to restoration rob the person of accurate judgment and make him impatient with both the prescribed treatment and his hitherto unquestioned religious principles. Forms of faith-cure, or religious vagaries, which dispense with the skill and recourses of the medical profession and which reverent scholarship and sound science have discredited, seldom if ever redeem their sweeping promises. If the patient does recover, which is often the case thanks to previous medical care or to the unassisted healing forces of nature, he is likely to ascribe the cure to the religious fad or unscientific procedure he has recently embraced. If he makes no recovery until he has again placed himself into the hands of a competent physician, he is likely to lose his faith in every form of religion, good or treacherous.

The sensitive patient may draw the inference that his malady is a penalty for wrongdoing. That many of our bodily diseases are the outcome of misconduct cannot be successfully repudiated. Moral evil does result in reflex action injurious to the body. A life devoted to iniquity does actually, sooner or later, undermine bodily health. On the other hand, the assumption that every ailment from a headache to a cancer is the direct product of moral corruption is preposterous. Many diseases afflict the righteous as well as the ungodly. Their origins are not affiliated with morals. The patient who is oversensitive may attribute a disorder which has no connection at all with his character habits to imaginary moral blemishes for which he holds himself to accountability. If such is his attitude, he will develop a superfluous sense of shame and guilt. His moral torments may increase his bodily affliction or retard its

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removal. The mental agony suffered may create a definite personality disability which will persist even after the bodily disease has been cured.

THE ACQUISITION OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

What are some of the creative benefits of being sick? First of all, one thinks of becoming better acquainted with the body. The patient learns what his bodily weaknesses are and to what physical dangers he is subject. Perhaps he has not given much previous thought to the body and its functions. So long as the individual is organically sound and mentally occupied with the routine of daily life, he is not likely to pay much attention to the bodily processes, such as digestion and blood circulation. Now as a sick man he is vividly aware of the fact that his body is not a perpetually self-renewing machine. He may have felt twinges but dismissed them as passing phases of no importance, but as a patient he realizes that the lightly regarded pains were warning signals of a disease making its onset. He is led to take an inventory of his bodily conditions.

Sickness should lead to better health through the cultivation of habits which safeguard the physical reserves. It has often been remarked that if a person in his youth is overtaken by an illness and as a consequence takes care of himself, he will probably live to a ripe old age. Numerous examples of cases are cited in which the afflicted has exercised continual precaution and outlived declared life expectancy. The prudent man knows that prevention is less costly in every way than cure, and that it pays to halt disease, whenever possible, in its early stages. The fore-

sighted adult undergoes a thorough medical examination once or preferably twice a year whether or not he has any physical disability of which he is aware. The periodic health inspection has self-evident advantages of which an intelligent person avails himself.

The convalescent has a rare opportunity to become better acquainted with himself as a person. He has time in which to think of what manner of man he is. During the long hours when he is alone, or during the night, when the forces of nature are restoring health, he may examine his moral habits, realize in what particulars he has failed as a son or father or friend or worker, and appraise his philosophy of life, the system of ideas and ideals which regulate his behavior.

Perhaps for the first time in his life he analyses and weighs his governing purposes and ultimate goals. He may conclude that he has been consuming too much energy in non-essentials, been wasting strength, and been devoting too little time and attention to the things that matter most, such as friendship, good citizenship, wholesome recreation, and the relief of the distressed. The simple yet grand things like the stars, the wild animals, the children, and what some call the plain people, acquire a significance they never before possessed. The insufficiency of a defective religion may be detected. A wholesome attitude which enables one to absorb the shocks of life may be deliberately cultivated.

Sickness entails a certain concentration of energies and a complete reversal of the habits of a life of action and accomplishment in the world's work. This situation provides an excellent opportunity, not only for a moral inven-

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tory, but also for the breaking of undesirable habits and the abandoning of questionable personal practices. If the patient has been a smoker, he is deprived of tobacco at least during the critical stages of his physical disability. Circumstances afford him an easy method of terminating the customary use of anything which has been injurious to health and of which conscience disapproves. The force of habitual indulgence is broken by the incidence of serious illness. If the patient has a strong desire to abstain from a harmful addiction, as has already been stated, all he has to do to obtain permanent deliverance is not to resume it when he is convalescent nor later when he is fully restored to health. It is evident that illness can be utilized as a means of purging the individual of objectionable practices which previously have gained momentum and become ingrained.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER VALUES

Precious character qualities emerge from an experience of sickness. The fair flower of patience grows in the soil of suffering endured without bitterness, and its color and fragrance are benedictions to all who come under its quiet spell. The careless man re-thinks his ways, regrets the hours and energies misspent, and resolves to make the most of the rest of his life. A balanced point of view is established; there is at once a wholesome independence of lesser things and an active appreciation of the things which afford internal and eternal satisfaction. An attitude which absorbs trying circumstances of all kinds is taken, and confidence in the world in which we live and work and play and worship is established.

The sick man, if he is unselfish, understanding, and

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alert, develops a new and vital appreciation of other people, their struggles and sorrows and joys, their longings for something to which to cling that no earthly upheavals can demolish. The nurse or friend who smooths the pillow and administers the prescribed remedies, the faithful doctor who watches the progress of the disease and assists nature to overcome disability, and the visitors who call can be seen through eyes that are open to the best in human nature.

Tolerance for others with and from whom one differs may seem natural, and one may marvel why a person ever thought harshly of another. Sickness makes one more considerate of others if one realizes that grief and disappointment and pain are the lot of all, and that each heart knows its own bitterness. Why add to the burden which life imposes upon a fellow human being? One can, if one will, learn through suffering how foolish is hardness of heart, how inhuman hatred, how stupid jealousy.

The sick have fellowship with those who suffer. The sick constitute a brotherhood. Bonds of illness unite them in a relationship of unique intimacy. Those who have known from personal experience what serious sickness means can most effectively approach the suffering. Only the man who has endured pain and faced the grim spectre of death can speak with authority to the sick, encourage them when they falter and comfort them in their darkest moments. The person who has not been dangerously ill, in the nature of the case, can speak only conventional words of sympathy to those who are afflicted in body and mind. The man who is or has been sick realizes best the frame of mind of him who is laid aside by illness and must endure physical pain and mental anguish and wait for the healing

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powers to gain the victory. If he is wise and brotherly, he will minister to the necessities of suffering humanity.

A new point of view can be formulated through sickness, a deeper understanding of life fostered, a more sympathetic approach to the perplexities of others made, and a sense of kinship with all who are sick nurtured. John Prior was hospitalized seven times and underwent as many operations. The surgeons removed various parts of his anatomy, including a leg. He was such a radiant spirit that doctors, nurses, and fellow-patients alike were sorry whenever he was discharged from the hospital. His financial resources were meager, and he was a ward patient. To visitors he had but little to say about his own pathetic bodily condition. He refrained from describing his several operations, his own woes, and deprivations. He was interested in the welfare of other people and in world affairs. It was John Prior who, from his own ward bed of ghastly anguish, cheered and sustained the little boy with an enormously enlarged heart who cried with pain and for his mother in the night. It was John who fortified the man whose right leg was to be amputated the next morning, explaining that he himself found an artificial leg not at all intolerable.

A spirit of faith and cheer can be radiated by the sick who look up, not down, and forward, not backward. Visitors who come to the sickroom to cheer a patient, may remain to be encouraged and heartened. Many a patient has learned to think more of the welfare of others than of his own. His strength is contagious. Many a sickroom is a place of inspiration and hope for all the depressed who enter it. Without saying a single word, but by atti-

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tudes of patience and goodwill and the indication of benefits reaped from his own experience, a sick man may influence the well for good.

INVOLUNTARY VACATIONS

In numerous cases sickness compels a person to take a first real vacation. Many a mother has her first holiday when an ailment puts her to bed and temporarily halts her customary activities. For the first time in her married life others do the cooking, the cleaning, and the hundred other household duties that have been performed by her. How strange it all seems to her! She who has taken it for granted that she should serve is now being served. At last she must take a long rest.

The habit of working for others without thought of herself is so strong that it renders her uncomfortable for a few days, but in time she relaxes and surrenders to release from responsibility and toil. She learns that her household is not collapsing during her illness. After a fashion the chores are done. It is unfortunate that she had no vacations when she was well, but one of the rewards of sickness is temporary freedom from labor. She can dream and enjoy the attentions paid her, once pain has been alleviated or banished and the tide of health is flowing. The friendly hands of the neighbors and the clumsy but kind ones of her husband do the housework and care for the children. For once the mother must submit to the ministrations of others and spend hours and days doing just no work at all. If she is ill in a hospital, her return to the home after her enforced vacation will be a gala occasion.

A business man who has been occupied for years by

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his responsibilities is afflicted by illness. He has imagined that his business could not survive, much less prosper, without his ceaseless personal supervision. For years he has been a slave to his business; and his response to the suggestion of his associates that he take a needed vacation has been, "I have no time." He takes his first vacation in years in bed as a patient. If he is dangerously ill he will of course not think seriously of his business; he will not worry lest it be ruined by his absence and inactivity. When the crisis has passed and his thoughts revert to his accustomed activities, he may at first be slightly mortified and then relieved to learn that he was not as indispensable to his business as he had fancied. His partners and employees seem to be conducting the business with a degree of efficiency that matches his own. He begins to ponder why he has not taken periodic vacations in the past. It may occur to him that constant work under tension has deprived him of some of the finest things life offers. He may be driven to the conclusion that servitude to his business is now exacting its toll in pain and bodily impairment.

His vacation in the sick bed gives him ample time to reflect. While he is recuperating he may resolve to rearrange his mode of living. For the time being he is not the overlord of his employees but just a sick man. In his weakness and infirmity he and they may find common ground. The janitor or night watchman of his place of business may visit him, and the shy but sincere gesture of personal interest in the welfare of the employer may be so touching that the imposed vacation is glorified. During the period of enforced leisure the relationships between employer and employee may be sweetened because each perceives in the

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other a person and not a boss or a hand. The business man's illness and its accompanying release from active responsibility is weighted with possibilities which he will realize if he is a man of discernment.

The wise patient does not think of his symptoms until he is morbid; nor does he occupy himself exclusively with moral, vocational, and social rehabilitation, urgent as may be the process of personality and occupational rebuilding. He engages in activities that are self-forgetting, restful, relaxing. He reads cheerful books, books that do not unduly tax his strength and the contents of which are not too weighty to be readily grasped. The patient may be read to if he is too weak to read himself and yet strong enough to understand. Puzzles, not too complicated but interesting, will occupy many an hour and divert attention from himself. A sincere interest in other patients languishing in the hospital or in their own homes is good medicine for himself and them.

After a serious illness the individual may draw the conclusion that the experience on the whole can be turned to advantage. Whether sickness is a help or a handicap depends on the spirit which the patient displays. If he lets suffering, financial loss, a sense of a dependence on drugs or on other persons, and morbidity undermine his personality, his happiness will be shattered; and his usefulness to his friends, family, and community will be diminished if not destroyed. If during the days when he is confined to the sickroom he becomes more intimately acquainted with the nature of his physical constitution, plans an intelligent health program to be applied in the days to come, understands himself better as a human being,

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cultivates fellowship with others who are ill, becomes more patient with others and more tolerant of the failings of mankind, relaxes and rests, relinquishes disapproved forms of behavior, his experience will be positively beneficial and enriching.

Sickness! Bane or blessing: which? The answer depends on the individual. A young man facing the probability of a permanent and serious physical disability recently said to me: "In a way I shall always live without security, but a good education is the best weapon with which to fight the handicap. I believe that I can make all the adjustments necessary to my affliction, and whatever happens I do not intend to let it interfere with my happiness." This statement was made by a formerly very active youth after a hospital experience of months and months; by an athletically disposed student whose physicians have forbidden such sports as tennis or swimming, in which he excelled, and strenuous physical work of any sort; by one who faces grim reality and is prepared to challenge it with courage and endurance. Physical ailment can only enrich a personality like that.

CHAPTER XII

MEN WITHOUT GOD

MULTITUDES have collapsed under the strains imposed by circumstances which mark this specially hectic age. A widening shadow of personality disability is stretching across what we are pleased to call the civilized world. Physicians and other investigators of human nature in its modern setting have ventured to predict the percentage of the total population of our own country which in the course of the next twenty years will be confined in institutions for the mentally defective. Some have forecast the proportion of those institutionalized who will recover from their mental defects, as compared with those who will be doomed to the tragic fate of the incurable. According to these tabulations the outlook for the soundness of mind of a major fraction of the European and North American people is dark.

No doubt several of the estimates of the number of persons who will suffer what are often referred to as nervous breakdowns are exaggerated, are too far extended and overweighted. Even so, the fact is indisputable that all too many lead lives of desperation, and are excessively perturbed and in conflict with others. They are emotionally

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unbalanced, perhaps vocationally miscast and depressed by poverty, or matrimonially mismated, lonely, tortured by fears, despondent, and friendless.

THE EXPOSURE OF A FALSE PHILOSOPHY

A point of view which facilitates accommodation to adverse conditions is not a luxury, but actually indispensable to hearty, socially invested, and balanced personality. It is not something which one can accept or reject without the decision's making any perceptible difference in the conduct of life, in one's emotional tone, usefulness, and frame of mind. Food and shelter and clothing are needful, but man does not live by these alone. It may be expedient for a cripple to provide himself with a needed artificial leg, but it is a further and far more delicate task for him to replace an attitude of bitterness and frustration with an attitude of serenity. To drop a dole into the palm of one who is poor and worthy is a praiseworthy act of brotherhood and perhaps a sort of first aid, but the recipient's deepest need is not met unless his personality is undergirded by an unshakable conception of the meaning and purpose of life and a more dignified method of supplying his temporal wants.

The chief cause of the typical moral and mental collapse is the lack of an adequate philosophy of life, that is to say, a system of valid principles which vitalize and stabilize a man day by day. In order to endure the stress of the times through which we are passing, it is imperative that personality be fortified by convictions which are real, inspiring, and applicable to the circumstances of the individual. Considerate yet forceful personality grows in the

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subsoil of a view of the world which is at once sound and winsome.

Shallow minds allege that it does not matter what a man believes if only he is persuaded that his guiding conceptions are true. A moment's reflection should convince one that sincerity alone is insufficient. Fidelity to conviction must be wedded to solid fact in order to function effectively in a crisis. The fact that a surgeon believes that a man is suffering from appendicitis and removes the appendix will not cure the patient if what ails him is a brain tumor.

To be sure, faith as such can show results. The mental attitude influences bodily processes. If I believe that I have a heart ailment, I shall arouse palpitation, experience shortness of breath, and perhaps pain in the left side of the chest. On the other hand, there are limits which faith cannot transcend. A bread pill taken under the impression that it is a sedative may induce sleep; but strychnine, which is a heart stimulant, taken with the supposition that it is a sedative probably will not tranquilize the individual and put him to sleep. Belief that fancy is fact produces certain effects, but it is restricted by the intensity of faith and the responsiveness of the personality. Imagination alone is not all-powerful. The ship whose pilot honestly believes that he is steering it between shoal and rock may be wrecked. A course charted by dependable knowledge and experience will guide the ship safely past danger points and into the harbor. Recognition of and reliance on supreme realities and moral principles constitute a solid basis for normality.

So long as life's sun is shining and the sky is cloudless

and the person's course is even and untroubled, the defects of a treacherous philosophy of life are not made manifest. What he believes in and cleaves to as the heart of the universe does not make a practical difference so long as his governing principles are not put to rigorous tests. It is when a crisis arises, temptations assail, fortune takes wings, friends grow cold, health breaks, and loneliness oppresses, that the shallowness, the deceit, and the absurdity of a false view of life are glaringly disclosed. The man who is morally confused or defeated has been betrayed by a philosophy of life which is opposed to the eternal verities such as decency, honor, brotherly love, and trust in a God of power and mercy.

Jesus understood this basic law of normal living. He closed the Sermon on the Mount, which is a summary of his teaching, with the solemn declaration: "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof." These words are either the world's most flagrant exhibition of the sin of presumption or the quintessence of wisdom which none can disregard with impunity. Those who throughout the centuries of the Christian era have taken the teachings of Jesus seriously and have made his statements of man's possibilities and of

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God's sustaining power the foundations of their working philosophy, have decisively demonstrated their truth and practicability.

The two houses to which Jesus refers are two persons. Whether the houses differ in size, architectural design, age, or composition Jesus does not state. He is seemingly indifferent as to whether the one house is beautiful, the other ugly; the one made of stone, the other of wood; the one a few years older than the other. With the precision, balance, lucidity, and simplicity which characterize his thinking Jesus ignores all these conditions and lifts the central and decisive element into prominence. A difference in the quality of the foundations is the only and ultimate consideration. The one was built upon unsubstantial sand, the other upon solid rock.

Two men may or may not be much alike in ability, social standing, and material prosperity. In this connection Jesus does not mention and appraise any of these by no means unimportant factors. He stresses the one and only point he wishes his hearers to comprehend and accept. He implies that in one respect the two were alike and in another they were different.

Both had heard his words. They knew that with authority he had praised and commended those who are teachable, humble, sincere, hungering and thirsting after moral excellence, merciful, and persecuted for his sake. Both had heard him denounce anger without cause, evil intentions, easy divorcement, and vows that sounded pious but were mere multiplicity of words. Both had heard him exhort men to overcome evil with good. Both had heard him condemn vulgar display of relief of the poor, ostenta-

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tious and lengthy prayers, fasting by rote and for public approval, anxiety which dishonors God, and harsh judgment of a brother's small fault while overlooking one's own major vice. Both had heard him teach self-respect, implicit trust in God as a father willing and able to supply our needs. His demand for single-minded devotion to the will of God rang in their ears. Both had heard Jesus' exposition of the fundamentals of the good life. In this respect they were on a parity.

On the other hand, a sharp distinction divided the two men. The one heard and heeded the words of Jesus; the other heard but rejected them. For a season all seemed to be well with both; no basic difference between them was apparent, although the one was at heart foolish, that is to say, improvident and negligent, and the other was wise, or prudent and judicious. But at last the tests of adversity, deprivation, and sorrow were applied. The man whose life was regulated by Jesus' philosophy of life was unshaken. The crisis merely disclosed the solidity of the foundations upon which he had erected the superstructure of his mode of living. The man whose life was governed by deception, illusion, unreality, and fraud collapsed when the rains of outward disaster descended, the floods of affliction rose, and the winds of incitement to evil blew. The instability, treacherousness, and destructiveness of the foundations of his personality were exposed by the crisis which overtook and overwhelmed him.

RELIGION AND NORMALITY

Evidently, it does actually matter what we believe in and depend on and are guided by. What we are committed

to with all our heart arouses feeling and then consonant action. If we place our confidence in sham or falsehood or error, in the day of reckoning we shall be overpowered by the natural consequences of our folly such as despair, futility and guilt. We shall be demoralized. A nervous collapse may occur. If we put our trust in truth and goodness and the active support of God, we shall be able to withstand the attacks of misfortune. So far from destroying mental health, an emergency met under God strengthens and confirms normality.

Jesus nowhere submits proofs for the existence, goodness, and co-operation of God. Arguments for the existence of God convince only those who already believe in him, have received his help, and have learned to trust him even when reason no longer outlines the way one should take. Jesus, assuming that God exists, devoted himself to the task of demonstrating that God is easily accessible and that his purpose for every man is constantly benevolent. Jesus was engaged in setting forth the quality of God, rather than in proving that God actually exists. The man who relies implicitly upon the mercy and power of God will know that he is; and the man who refuses to make the venture of faith in God will not be benefited, even if he should believe in the existence of God in order to account for the coming into being of the world of nature.

Furthermore, Jesus knew, and his faithful followers know, that he who trusts God and acts for the right as conscience enlightened by God manifesting himself in various modes urges, is working not against but in accordance with the laws of nature and life. The man who is controlled by a philosophy of ignoble expediency, of disregard

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for self-respect, for the welfare of others, and for the power and mercy of God, is opposing the very nature of the universe and is bound, sooner or later, to come to grief. In the long run, he cannot avoid the destruction of mental health. He who has been led into the experience and meaning of Christian living is on the side of the angels; the stars in their courses are fighting for him; and he is in league with the principles which govern the universe. Nothing could be more practical, more effective, more conducive to normal personality than a sound religious philosophy of life.

A substantial philosophy of life is not the creation of a day. It is gradually formulated in the school of religious living. Moral strength is generated by victory over inward conflicts and outward disasters; new light breaks when the insight we possess has been utilized; ideals are clarified by appropriate experience; and faith in the goodness of God is increased by exercise. It takes time to cultivate a practical basis for effective living.

David Lester's wife, a woman of culture and a congenial companion, died. His friends were afraid that the heavy loss would prostrate David. It is true that he mourned her passing from this world, but he did not despair nor relinquish his religious faith. Following the advice of friends, he took a brief vacation for rest and the rearrangement of his life. They became aware that a unique power was upholding David in his bereavement. It dawned upon some of his associates that he was triumphing over bitter circumstances. The religious supports upon which he leaned in the time of sorrow were not built in a day, but were the creation of years. The rich stores of reserves, so

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far from being depleted by his tribulation, were actually multiplied.

Religion, true and undefiled, is not a system of rules and practices added to the sum total of the pleasant and oppressive experiences which collectively are called life, but a relationship with a Power other and greater than ourselves, a relationship in which we judge all things visible and unseen, and in which we achieve our destiny and develop wholesome, hearty, and normal personality.

THE UNWORKABLE STRATEGY OF THE NEUROTIC

Those who deviate from the normal, who are privately unhappy and worried and openly in conflict with other people, should understand that to be a neurotic is not easy but hard. The insane, although by no means always content, at least do not know that they have suffered a mental collapse. They harbor the delusion that they are normal; the neurotic, at least in moments of honesty, knows that his personality is warped and thwarted. The neurotic insists on living in a personal world of his own creation, a world that rocks and reels on its unstable foundations. Verily, the lot of the neurotic is hard.

The sooner he admits that he is working against nature, the principles of true religion, the mandates of morality and the conventions of ordered society, and proceeds to solve his problems, the better for him and for those who have to live with him. The conflict with himself and with other persons can be ended only when he utilizes the resources God has placed at his command.

Many who are abnormal and take cognizance of their deplorable state declare that they are nervous wrecks.

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They impute their condition to a defect or disease of the nervous system. Now as already admitted it cannot be successfully denied that the brain, the spinal cord, and the nerves can be so physically affected that personality deteriorates. Prolonged and intense terror may exhaust the nerves and lead to a galaxy of mental disorders. Only a competent physician can determine whether the nerve and brain cells have been affected, whether mental aberrations are the outcome of an organic defeat.

On the other hand, the overwhelming number of cases of personality collapse are as remotely connected with a brain or nerve disease as the frequently mentioned but not yet seen inhabitants of the planet Mars. What ails most despondent, ineffective, and unpopular persons is a false and unworkable mode of living. An adequate philosophy of life wholeheartedly accepted would in due time restore them to normality. The delusion that nerves are worn out is just another trick that our minds play on us.

What many people who are miserable, discontented, domestically unhappy, weighted with guilt, and distracted by worry, need most is not sedatives which dull the sensibilities, not alcoholic stupor which affords temporary forgetfulness, not a holiday in Paris with its gaiety and glamour, not frequent visits to the movies. These diverse forms of escape from conflicts only ultimately increase the distorted idea of normal life. A philosophy which is at once real and practical, emotionally satisfying and morally productive, redemptive and releasing, is the only substantial foundation for normality. About the worst trick our minds try to play on us is the substitution of fantasy for fact, of escape from struggle for disagreeable reality, and of amusement for God.

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Not that mental sedatives, temporary withdrawal from a critical and puzzling situation, cannot be justified when used with discretion. Jesus once said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Perhaps nobody can comprehend the full significance of this invitation. It is, however, clear that Jesus is offering himself, his teaching, his example, his personal revelation of God—all that he lived and died for—as a refuge to all who are sorely perplexed, to all who are internally depressed and externally oppressed, to all who are battlegrounds of conflicting emotions, to all who are misunderstood, discredited, and forlorn. He presents himself to all such as a center of peace.

Surely Jesus did not propose to assume responsibilities which men themselves should shoulder and discharge. True religion does not drug one into insensibility to obligation and impart a false feeling of security in the hour that demands intelligent decision and brave action. Nevertheless, a retreat to the comforting words of Jesus and a reliance on a fatherly God give the troubled individual assurance, time to formulate an effective plan of attack, and an opportunity to recuperate and mobilize his resources. To expect God to do alone what we should do with insight and courage in co-operation with him is one thing; to retire for a season from the conflict of life in order to acquire perspective and increase spiritual reserves is quite another. In fact the latter course is not merely permissible, it is actually necessary.

It would be folly not to accept the gracious invitation of Jesus, for he teaches men how to wear the yoke of duty. Life would impose a yoke upon every man; Jesus would not

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have any refuse it, but he shows how it should be worn. To meditate, to rest, to explore the resources one has and which reside in God is not to flee from life's tribulations but to prepare for the most effective disposition of them.

CATCHING THE SPIRIT OF THE UNIVERSE

Account for it as we may, a rhythmic something is in charge of the world of man and nature. When we live in harmony with the regularity and periodicity of the center of all, when our hearts beat in unison with the heart of creation, we lead normal, victorious, and satisfying lives, whether we are farmers or poets, teachers or carpenters, housekeepers or lawyers. When we ignore the direct action of the Creator, we are defeated, incomplete, and thwarted personalities.

The record of man's search for God and his co-operation is a thrilling chapter in the story of mankind. In moments of anguish man has cried out, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him!" Man has made many painful pilgrimages in his quest for God. That does not, however, constitute the entirety of man's religious adventure. At the same time, God has been seeking man and approaching him with love and power. So far from being uninterested in man and indifferent to his lot, God has sought to disclose himself. When man responds to the fatherly effort of God to sustain, a relationship of co-operation is established. Fellowship between God and man is promoted, although God is the creator and man the creature. "We love, because he first loved us." If God does not take the initiative man cannot apprehend him; if man does not yield to the

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divine promptings the most potent resources for personality development are unutilized.

One summer day a writer spent an entire morning in a vain effort to compose a single paragraph. His sentences were devoid of the music that gives words meaning and force. At last he abandoned the futile attempt, for he knew that he was not in harmony with the world. Leaving his cabin in the woods, where he spent several months each summer, he strode up a nearby hill to watch a farmer mow grass. The farmer's literary accomplishments did not extend far beyond the ability to sign his name, but the writer felt that the man with the scythe could help him. He was right, for the farmer did teach him a lesson.

When the writer caught sight of him the farmer was sharpening his scythe with a whetstone. The whetting made the countryside ring with music. Having sharpened the blade, the farmer pocketed the stone, gripped the handles of the scythe, bent forward, and almost lazily swung the tool back and forth. Every movement he made played into the vast system of law through which God governs the universe. He seemed to be one with nature as the grass fell in even swaths. The farmer was co-operating with nature; his rhythmic adjustment accomplished his purpose with a minimum expenditure of energy.

The writer returned to his cabin and let his mind work in unison with the spirit that pulsates at the center of all. He wrote in harmony with a power he felt but could not describe. The result was that he produced paragraphs which appeared later in print, unrevised.

Let us not assume that if only we are inactive the rhythm of the world will support us, energize us, give us

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insight and courage. Mental health is not bestowed upon a passive individual, upon one who is too indolent to exert himself on his own behalf, or upon one who opposes the laws of victorious living. The normal personality attempts neither effortless floating downstream nor a self-sufficient struggle against the current. The man who lets the current determine his course is an adult infant who depends on others to assume his emotional problems, make his decisions, and hasten to his rescue whenever anything contrary to his preferences overtakes him. He who swims against the current is a man who, if he is gifted and persistent and energetic, accomplishes something; but it may be downright evil or less in quantity and poorer in quality than it should be. The well-poised individual, the balanced mind, avoids these extremes and swims downstream. He is on the Lord's side. This is the way in which the personality achieves normality, a wholesome outlook on life and an insight into the forces which sustain the individual.

The grass did not fall until the farmer swung his scythe. The pivotal point is that by playing into the system of natural law he mowed the grass with graceful expenditure of minimal effort. He who learns that the heart of the universe throbs with healing forces and adjusts his personality to its rhythm will experience an infiltration of moral power and the acquisition of insight and courage before which personality disabilities will fall.

THE REDIRECTION OF ENERGIES THROUGH WORSHIP

Religious meditation is one of the most potent correctives for the tricks that human nature plays on itself. It helps one to achieve harmony with the Infinite through

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relaxation, the exposure of the personality to God, and the disinterested adoration of God. One memorable afternoon I attended a service held in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. The order, seemliness, beauty, and historical associations of the ritual of the Church of England made a deep impression upon the hundred or more who paused to worship. The brief sermon delivered by one of the clergy was scriptural, intellectually penetrating, and edifying. These things were prized, but outranking them all in significance was a scene I shall always recall with a grateful heart.

As I walked down a side-aisle after the service I saw a boy, ten or twelve years old, kneeling, his head resting upon arms which, in turn, were supported by the back of the chair before him. I observed him closely. A kneeling figure in an English cathedral is not a novelty, but this boy's posture attracted and held my attention. The bodily attitude was not that of one agonizing. There was no visible indication of mental agitation. The boy was completely relaxed. It dawned upon me that he was engaged in the reverent contemplation of God.

His entire physical attitude was indicative of humble and trustful adoration of God. He was so absorbed in his religious devotions that he took no notice of his surroundings; it was as if he had prostrated himself before God in love and self-giving in the midst of the vast solitude of a desert. If all the rest of London had been whirling madly around the cathedral the boy would have been the exact center of perfect stillness. The words of the psalmist, "Be still and know that I am God," came to mind and acquired a fresh meaning.

Do not misunderstand. I do not advocate the process

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of emptying the mind of all ideas as a form of religious meditation. In fact, thinking of an extreme practice, I am not recommending a series of spiritual exercises culminating in a flood of ecstasy or in unconscious vacuity. The central purpose of the type of religious meditation I do commend consists of open receptivity, holy awe, the consciousness of the moral sublimity of God, of security and forgiveness. Worship should be not only a challenge to duty, but also a solace and a tonic.

The man who bows in reverence before God may become aware of personality defects, and his energies may henceforth be redirected. Hatred may be eradicated, extreme self-abasement banished, unreasonable fears dispersed, anxiety and distrust destroyed, and harsh circumstances faced with courage. Tension may give way to relaxation, inward turmoil to the tranquillity of a sound mind. He who has caught the spirit of the universe, or rather let himself be caught by it, has become still and learned that God is a living, sustaining Presence. He is not far from the kingdom of normality.

His idea of success will not be that of popular imagination. In fact, his life, like that of Jesus of Nazareth, may appear to the eyes of men without God simply another dismal failure. He who has grown into a saving knowledge of Christ will endure his cross without disappointment, but with a sense of victory. To have many earthly possessions will be of no importance. To receive the plaudits of the crowd will not be the chief end of living. To lord it over others will not occur to him, but to be the servant of all will be his joy and privilege. Sincerity and simplicity will mark his daily walk and conversation. He

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will belong to the company of those who testify, "God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love." He will know poise and serenity and the peace that passeth all understanding.

Is it essential that the individual, in order to undergird his life with the insight and power of religion, formulate his working philosophy in a formal creed or a statement? The answer is that the guidance of life, the fortification of personality by the highest principles we can discover is sufficient. The practical application of the fundamentals of the religion which Jesus made imperative, rather than an explicit interpretation in terms of a system of doctrine, is after all primary.

Many people who live the Christian life and have developed normal personalities would hesitate, if requested, to give a detailed account of what they believe and practice. They bear witness to the value of a progressive Christian experience, but are reluctant to give what might be considered an explicit exposition of it. In fact, their attitude has much to commend it. As life proceeds, as insight into its meaning and possibility deepens, as personality is enriched by new light and fresh experience, one's religious philosophy is corrected and enlarged. Since an adequate practical philosophy of daily living expands with the growth of wholesome personality, a final statement of the particulars of it may be premature; but the grand fundamentals abide.

